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**Roger E. Backhouse** and
**Bradley W. Bateman, eds.**
*The Cambridge Companion to Keynes.*
New York: Cambridge University Press 2006.
Pp. 341.
US$70.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-521-84090-3);
US$28.99 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-521-60060-6).

The reputation of John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946) flagged somewhat in the last three decades of the twentieth century. During and after the Second World War, Keynesianism was the dominant school of economic theory and the cornerstone of government policy in many countries, including Canada, Britain and the United States. At the international level, Keynes' contributions to the Bretton Woods Agreement (1944) helped give form to new institutions of world economic management which, over time, morphed into the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. From the get-go, Keynesian economics had its critics, notably the neo-classical economists Dennis H. Robertson and A. C. Pigou. But, the strongest criticism of Keynesian theory came in the 1970s: the phenomenon of economic stagflation. Simultaneous stagnation and inflation were precluded by the dominant interpretation of Keynes' *General Theory of Money, Interest and Employment* (1936). In the 1980s, Keynesian policies were sometimes blamed for legitimating large government budget deficits and growing national debts, particularly in Canada, the United States and Britain. In the 1990s, some economists began to argue that Keynesianism was a passing 'interlude' or 'episode' that was about to come to a close.

In this volume editors Backhouse and Bateman contribute to a rejuvenation of Keynes' reputation. Their volume is an effective and elegant summary of recent scholarly reappraisal of Keynes' contributions to economics and philosophy. Taken together, the fifteen essays collected in this volume argue that, as Bateman puts it, 'the economics of Keynes' needs to be carefully distinguished from 'Keynesian economics'. Keynesian economics is a particular, but widely accepted, interpretation of the economics of Keynes that shows the comprehensiveness of the latter by presenting it in a formal model. This IS-LM model — developed mainly by John Hicks, Franco Mogdigliani, Don Patinkin and Paul Samuelson — was so compelling that it became the cornerstone of the so-called Keynesian orthodoxy. Over time, students came to learn Keynes by learning the IS-LM model, not by reading *The General Theory*. The end result was that the IS-LM model came to represent Keynes' economics *holus bolus*. This was a problem, as Axel Leijonhufvud suggests, because 'The theory had come to be identified with the model, so that the deficiencies of the model became fatal to the theory' (74). In other words, the gradual recognition that there were insuperable problems with the Keynesian IS-LM model led to the further and incorrect supposition that there were also insuperable problems with Keynes' economics.

As the essays in this volume show, there are significant differences between Keynesianism and the economics of Keynes. For example, a hallmark of Keynesianism is countercyclical fiscal policy; that is, where governments engage in deficit spending in economic hard times and reduce the deficit in good times. But, as Bateman points out, Keynes advocated such policies only during war time and during post-war reconstruction, and he never proposed on-going budget deficits for governments.

Another sign of the influence of Keynesianism is the prevailing perception that Keynes discovered macroeconomics. But, economists before Keynes were well aware of the macroeconomics of demand management and wage rigidity. In light of this, David Laidler argues that Keynes' was in the practical business of keeping investment 'in harmony with the economy's underlying saving rate' despite the volatile 'animal spirits' that dominated the psychology of individual investors and caused serious economic perturbations (47-8). This argument is buttressed by Leijonhufvud who adds that, by underscoring the persistent volatility and uncertainty of investor behaviors, Keynes broke with Alfred Marshall's so-called 'continuity principle', the assumption that economic processes converge on a stable equilibrium. Thus, whereas the manifest concern of Keynesians was to build a comprehensive macroeconomic model, Keynes' economic theory might be better understood as a 'diagnostic instrument', as Kevin D. Hoover argues. As such, the aim of the theory was to isolate particular causal mechanisms in order to provide better practical policy advice.

The papers in this volume do not dwell on the minutia of economic theory, but go on to discuss Keynes' philosophical influences and contributions to probability theory. A recurring theme is Keynes' debt to G. E. Moore. Tiziano Raffaelli shows how Keynes' early view of the good life was shaped by Moore's moral Platonism, which asserted that love and beauty were real objects and the only overarching ideals. Samuel Britten notes that Keynes may have emphasized developing practical responses to economic issues, not for reasons of avarice or materialism, but because (as Craufurd Goodwin suggests) an affluent society meant that more people would be able to pursue moral and aesthetic ideals. While this Moore-inspired view of the good life was probably an orthodoxy among members of the Bloomsbury circle (of which Keynes was a part), Keynes never fully converted to the Moorean creed. Thomas Baldwin surveys Keynes' early ethical treatise *Miscellanea ethica* (1905) and notes that it departs from Moore by offering a relational, rather than objective, account of the good.

The extent of Keynes' commitment to Moore-like ideas may seem a trivial issue, but it significantly affects how we understand his stance on the uncertainty of investor expectations, and this in turn also affects how we read *The General Theory*. Moore claimed that it was appropriate to act according to prevailing norms, because given that epistemic uncertainties are inevitable, actions could never be guaranteed to have good outcomes. This claim can be seen as having parallels in some passages of *The General Theory* where it is suggested that individual investors behave according to prevailing norms of

investment because they are faced with too many uncertainties. This parallel might be taken to suggest the on-going influence of Moore. However, Keynes' development of an objective account of logical probability in the *Treatise on Probability* (1921) can be read as departing from Moore by showing how probability theory could be used to mitigate uncertainties. Yet, as Donald Gillies discusses, Keynes revised his views on probability in light of damaging criticisms advanced by Frank Ramsey, so it is difficult to assess how or if Keynes' view of probability influenced *The General Theory*. Despite these interpretive problems, what is clear is that the only concept from Keynes' probability theory that clearly survives in *The General Theory* is the concept of 'evidential weight'. The economic evaluations of individual investors are based on evidence with very little weight, and according to Raffaelli, this explains why investor decisions 'are unstable and exposed to the sudden loss of confidence that triggers business depressions' (168).

In summary, this is *not* simply (yet another) *ad hoc* collection of essays. It is that rare and commendable thing, a collection of essays with an argument and purpose. These essays make a new view of Keynes available to a broad audience. In the new view, Keynes was a practical, rather than theory-oriented, economist who used economic analysis to mitigate the deleterious economic consequences of individuals making decisions on the basis of sketchy evidence in the face of uncertainties. Keynes conceived a moderate liberal individualism as being sustained and enriched by an economy that mixed private enterprise and limited government policy intervention. This individualism was underwritten by a moral vision that changed over time but, overall, viewed individuals as pursuing a variety of 'goods', some of which are economic and others of which are moral and aesthetic ideals.

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**Alan Bass**
*Interpretation and Difference:*
*The Strangeness of Care.* Stanford, CA:
Stanford University Press 2006.
Pp. 216.
US$68.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-8047-5337-1);
US$25.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-8047-5338-8).

This book is a striking philosophical interrogation of the practice of psychoanalysis. Drawing on a series of thinkers who have confronted the question of interpretation and metaphysics, Bass dismantles and reworks classic psychoanalytic tropes, re-reading those tropes through Nietzsche, Heidegger and Derrida respectively. The discussion that emerges from this re-reading provides an interesting and important entry point for new critical understandings of both psychoanalysis and the history of metaphysics. As Bass has attempted to build a network linking psychoanalytic practice with philosophical theory, this book could have important resonances both clinically and academically. The major substantive problem lies in Bass's somewhat superficial and breezy narration of a philosophical genealogy that sometimes shares more with Derrida's *interpretation* of Heidegger and Nietzsche than with the ideas of those thinkers on their own terrain.

As Bass notes in his introduction, this book was written as a companion volume to *Difference and Disavowal: The Trauma of Eros*. Leaving aside concerns about the logic of the supplement, it is clear that Bass is anxious to provide a philosophical grounding for his earlier work, re-examining his own theoretical evolution in the process. It is the problem posed by resistance to interpretation, or disavowal, to use the Freudian terminology, that opens up the philosophical terrain of metaphysics. In the patient's 'oscillation between reality and the fantasy replacement for it' (ix), we see, in the clinical context, the primary process of differentiation which is an *a priori* condition of interpretation. It is from this point that Bass engages Nietzsche's non-metaphysical, 'active' interpretation, Heidegger's *Daseinsanalytik*, and the Derridean notions of *différance* and binding.

The first chapter examines Nietzschean echoes in psychoanalysis. While Bass wanders through a plethora of philosophical concepts here, the discussion gels around two major tropes: the Will to Power and eternal recurrence. A heavy reliance on Gilles Deleuze is evinced in statements such as '(re)petition as difference *is* life as simultaneous articulation and connection' (10). Because of this interpretive overlay, Bass fails to convince the reader that he is engaging Nietzsche *qua* Nietzsche. Nevertheless, the chapter has value as a series of interesting observations regarding the psychodynamics of interpretation, and the concept of 'active' interpretation, though originally introduced by Deleuze, is one that merits further deliberation. Particularly noteworthy is Bass' encapsulation of self-preservation as 'the unconscious repetition of differentials of force' (30). The creation and proliferation of truths as a hermeneutic process are central to the work and act of psycho-

analysis itself. This process serves to underscore the themes of disavowal and fantasy that resonate throughout the book.

Bass turns to Heidegger and the question of descriptive, or phenomenological, interpretation in the second chapter. While Heidegger's thought has been considered somewhat inimical to psychoanalysis, due primarily to his 'Nazi affiliation and ontological orientation' (34), there are undoubtedly strong parallels between the Heideggerian reading of the history of metaphysics as a 'forgetting' and the Freudian concept of repression. This metaphysical symptomatology provides Bass with quite fertile ground for exploring connections with care, time and interpretation in Heidegger. This chapter is surprisingly rich, and the treatments of *Unheimlichkeit* (uncanniness), *Dasein's* care structure, language, and 'openness' are novel and engaging. Unlike the section on Nietzsche, which broaches nothing that has not already been covered by Ricoeur and others, this chapter offers substantial and relevant interpretive material, both in terms of a Heideggerian reading of psychoanalysis and the converse psychoanalytic reading of Heidegger. This is in part due to the manner in which Bass effortlessly weaves in supporting concepts from Klein, Winnicot and others.

In the final chapter, we move to Jacques Derrida, Bass' own mentor and former instructor, and the man to whom the book is dedicated. The source of Bass' philosophical genealogy is revealed here, drawn from Derrida's famous 1968 lecture 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of Human Sciences'. The genealogy is, in part, the genealogy of deconstruction itself, which can be traced to 'the Nietzschean critique of metaphysics . . . the Freudian critique of self-presence . . . and . . . the Heideggerian deconstruction of metaphysics' (Derrida in Bass, 96). The overarching concept around which this chapter revolves is *différance*, the Derridean 'neographism' which neatly captures both the concepts of differentiation and that of deferral, at once difference and repetition. Like the unconscious, like openness, *différance* is irreducible and inherently *resistant* to interpretation. It is, in effect, a disavowal, and through it Bass returns to his opening statement about the oscillation between fantasy and reality. Although Bass does not mention it explicitly, the function of *différance* here is similar to that of 'cleaving', which denotes both a splitting of and a resistance to separation. Through this act of cleaving, we can see the connection between the effects of difference and the effects of binding. Binding is central to understanding 'how the *repetition of resistance* to analysis concerns the very possibility of analysis' (185). This compulsive dialectic lies, in Bass' interpretation, at the very heart of psychoanalysis: 'It is the truth without truth of the repeated, timed, neutral analytical setting . . . (t)he bond to, the promise of, transference as repetition, revenance of the virtual, spectral trace of the necessary other as the possibility of interpretation' (186).

Bass' narrative in this book is not unlike Heidegger's *Holzwege*: critical paths that seem to lead nowhere. While his wanderings are not aimless, the reader is often left questioning the author's direction and purpose. This criticism notwithstanding, the text is provocative and at times quite brilliant. As

an admittedly resistant reviewer, I am convinced that Bass has opened up some new possibilities for further critical dialogue between philosophy and psychoanalysis.

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**Alexander Batthyany** and
**Avshalom Elitzur, eds**.
*Mind and its Place in the World:*
*Non-Reductionist Approaches to the Ontology*
*of Consciousness*.
Frankfurt: Ontos Verlag 2006.
Pp. 323.
US$115.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-3-937202-98-3).

This is a collection of twelve essays on non-reductionist and non-physical-ist approaches to the problem of consciousness. It begins with an essay by Hoyt Edge who, rather than addressing specific accounts of consciousness, takes up the 'more basic question . . . (W)hy do scientists and philosophers of science so naturally think that reductionism is an appropriate methodol-ogy?' (23). Edge suggests that there is a Euro-American bias towards the 'thinkway' of reductionism, and while this bias may be advantageous in cer-tain areas, it is inadequate in the case of consciousness. Focusing on Bernard Lonergan's interpretation of Thomas Aquinas, Donald P. Merrifield considers multi-disciplinary approaches and methodologies to consciousness, includ-ing first-person, phenomenological, and dynamical alternatives to reductive models.

Peter J. King squarely addresses the issue of ontology, and argues for a version of Cartesian dualism — '(r)eal, full-blooded, substance dualism' (61). King both considers charges that dualism is unscientific and offers what he takes to be an *experimentum crusis* for dualism. Russell Pannier and Thomas D. Sullivan defend a 'strong' version of property dualism. Mental properties are real and distinct from physical properties; nevertheless, we should en-deavor to reunify the mental and the physical — to reconnect the 'underlying subject' (90ff) with its mental states — as Aristotle's hylomorphism couples matter and form in one substance, 'embodied form' (98). Peter B. Lloyd pro-pounds a version of idealistic 'mental monism', and suggests that it offers a way of deflating the 'hard problem'. Indeed, if true it 'would solve the mind-body problem' (111). Unsurprisingly, however, it renders the conventional

materialist world-view untenable, for 'the physical world is a fiction' (123), a '*model* or construct which we . . . project onto . . . the phenomenal world' (128).

Fiona Steinkamp takes up the issue of the contents of consciousness, specifically the self-identification of one's own thoughts both in the context of everyday communication and telepathy. The answer to the question, 'How do I know this thought is mine' (152ff) has, it is argued, interesting implications for the relationship between the content of thought and the external world. Steven Lehar argues that phenomenology 'is an indispensable component of the science of psychology' (167) and that an inclusive and 'quantitative' phenomenology involving 'a quantitative model of the content of conscious experience, expressed in the subjective variables of perceived color, shape, and motion' (178), will require a reevaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of introspection and a recognition of the fact that the phenomenological data of consciousness cannot be captured by 'neuroreductionism'. Riccardo Manzotti proffers an externalist, process-based account ('vehicle externalism') of the consciousness-body-world relation, and he argues that from this perspective the drive toward neuroreductionism loses much of its intuitive appeal. On the other hand, on this view, '(t)here is no more dualism' (211) either. Paul Lovland considers a naturalistic account of action, one from a 'thermodynamic viewpoint' which, however, 'does not touch upon the mind-body problem' (226). Lovland draws an analogy between human actions and natural processes with the aim of including both the data of the subjective experience of willing and intending, and the laws of force and energy.

Howard Robinson takes up Parfit's challenge, giving an account of personal identity in terms of the self as a 'simple and immaterial entity', a 'Cartesian ego', which avoids 'Parfit's radically reductive theories of . . . self' (245). The only ontology which can account for the self's persistence over time is substance dualism. Gershon Kurizki offers a non-reductive theory of consciousness through a 'monistic quantum Spinozicism' (272), which explicates consciousness and the physical world through a 'reformulation of Spinozicism in terms borrowed from the apparatus of quantum mechanics' (270). In the final essay, J. Kenneth Arnette suggests that one reason for 'the intransigence of the problem of consciousness' is that 'data bearing directly on the nature of consciousness have been ignored' (280). Arnette considers evidence from near-death experiences — evidence conveniently ignored by materialists — which demonstrates the 'shortcomings of materialism generally' (280). In agreement with David Chalmers ('Facing up to the Problem of Consciousness' [1995]), Arnette contends that '(s)ubjective experience deserves an ontological status *at least* on par with matter-energy and space-time' (283).

Rather than critically assessing any one article, I will close by suggesting some general concerns with non-reductive accounts of consciousness, leaving it to the reader to decide whether or not any of the views expressed in this book can obviate these concerns. 'Reductionism' is an ambiguous term; while sometimes used as a synonym for 'microphysical reductionism' — the view

which gives explanatory and ontic primacy to microphysics and seeks 'reductive explanations' of phenomena studied by the special sciences — 'reductionism' is sometimes used to refer to mind-brain identity accounts of mind, accounts which identify mental or conscious properties with certain neurophysiological properties of sentient organisms. This is no small distinction. One can plausibly reject reductionism in the first sense while still maintaining that conscious properties are neurophysiological properties. That is, one might agree that the program of reducing the special sciences to microphysics is overly ambitious, even naïve — one might, for example, accept that with the emergence of complex systems comes novel causal potentialities — while nevertheless insisting that conscious properties *are* complex configurational and synchronic patterns of neural activity. In other words, there is no inconsistency in claiming to be a 'non-reductive identity theorist', a point Arnette apparently recognizes (288), although he believes this view is belied by phenomena like near-death experiences (291ff).

The benefits of such a view should be clear: not only is it parsimonious and 'naturalistic', it dispels the specter of epiphenomenalism by integrating conscious properties into the causal economy of the body. Insofar as anti-reductionist theories locate conscious properties outside — or 'above' — the organism, they threaten to reduce them to mere epiphenomena. King (63-7) offers a spirited, if ultimately unconvincing, defense of dualism against the epiphenomenalist challenge; see also Lloyd (132ff) and Lehar (183ff). Arnette (308ff) acknowledges the problem and cites a series of articles in which he attempts to explicate mind-body interaction. Manzotti's solution to the problem of epiphenomenalism is perhaps the most convincing, precisely because he collapses the problematic dualism: epiphenomenalism is avoided because '(e)very phenomenal state is identical with a physical process that . . . has causal powers' (211).

The 'easy/hard problem' distinction, which is either explicitly or implicitly accepted in many of these essays, lends itself to epiphenomenalism. The easy problems, according to Chalmers (*The Conscious Mind* [1996]), are all those problems in cognitive science and psychology which can be explained by appeal to function and structure; the hard problem is explaining why some of the processes and properties explained by appeal to function and structure also have a 'what-it-is-like' aspect. Put this way, the implication for the causal efficacy of conscious properties is clear; they are caused by the brain but do not contribute to its functioning. Two points are worth noting here. First, the failure to meet a certain model of structural-functional reductive explanation in no way speaks against the position of the identity theorist who is making a metaphysical claim independent of epistemological concerns over reductive explanations. Second, it is *dualism* that implies a (seemingly) intractable 'explanatory gap', insofar as the relation between the brain and the non-physical conscious properties it produces remains quite mysterious. In other words, it is only with the acceptance of dualism that we see a *gap* between the phenomena which cries out for explanation.

In fact, the identity theorist has an answer to the question why some neurophysiological properties are also accompanied by experiences: *they are identical*. But this fact neither denies subjectivity nor ignores the obvious epistemic asymmetries inherent in the mind-body relation. As Herbert Feigl (*The 'Mental' and the 'Physical': The Essay and a Postscript* [1967]) convincingly argued, a duality of perspectives is consistent with a property monism and can accommodate subjectivity; while the neuroscientist is able to observe and study my experience of the taste of lemon, in as much as she is able to observe and study any neurophysiological activity, only I am in the position to *live through* that neurophysiological activity. To know what-it-is-like to taste lemon one must have experienced lemon, and this implies that one's brain has been stimulated in the right ways. It is of little surprise to the identity theorist, then, that giving a complete neuro-functional account of the organism will not deliver this 'knowledge', for such an account would not stimulate the brain in the right way.

Although some will find the thrust of this book metaphysically gratuitous, both the dualist inclined toward non-physical accounts of consciousness, and the materialist interested in arguments which challenge her world-view, will find this book both stimulating and useful.

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**Thorsten Botz-Bornstein**
*Vasily Sesemann: Experience, Formalism, and the Question of Being.*
New York: Rodopi 2006.
Pp. 148.
US$39.00 (paper ISBN-13: 978-90-420-2092-4).

More than anybody else Vasily Sesemann (1884-1963), the most eminent academic philosopher in inter- and post-war Lithuania, merits the title 'Baltic philosopher'. The son of a Finnish-Swedish father and Russian-German mother, Sesemann could claim several different identities, and was equally at home in Finnish-Swedish, Russian, German, and Lithuanian linguistic and cultural milieus. A Finnish and Lithuanian philosopher (Vosylius Sezemanas in Lithuania) who had strong ties with Russian and German intellectual cultures, Sesemann may well be described as a symbolic bridge between Finland and Lithuania, and also as a European thinker in at once the most exclusive and inclusive senses of these terms.

Together with his colleague and friend Lev Karsavin, a noted Russian religious thinker and erudite cultural historian, Sesemann made up the best of Vytautas Magnus University faculty in Kaunas before WWII, exerting a strong intellectual presence in Lithuania and internationalizing the academic life of a small country. Influenced by the Marburg School of neo-Kantian philosophy and phenomenology, Sesemann also stood quite close to Russian Formalism, and was ahead of his time in more than one way. A thinker of European stature and a brilliant lecturer, his impact on the younger generation of Lithuanian academics and intellectuals was immense. Sesemann's works in philosophy of culture, value theory, logic, and aesthetics remain landmarks in modern Lithuanian philosophy.

Botz-Bornstein's timely book on Sesemann gives a second life to this great, albeit long-neglected and little known thinker of the Baltics. As Botz-Bornstein lucidly and convincingly argues, Sesemann, combining and reconciling Western and Eastern European educational systems and modes of discourse, anticipated extraordinary changes in philosophy, *Kulturwissenschaften*, and theoretical humanities. Suffice it to recall the Finnish semiotician Eero Tarasti's hypothesis, offered in his most illuminating preface for Botz-Bornstein's book, that Sesemann may have stood behind the emergence of modern semiotics, and that he may have provided a methodological and interpretive framework for it.

Born in Viipuri (Vyborg), Karelia, Finland, and brought up in a multicultural background in Russia, Sesemann studied philosophy at the University of St. Petersburg, Russia, and then at the University of Marburg, Germany. In Germany, he discovered the Marburg and Freiburg schools of the neo-Kantians. Nicolai Hartmann, who would become one of the important figures in modern German philosophy, was Sesemann's classmate in a St. Petersburg classical gymnasium. Having spent their young days in Russia, they developed a life-long friendship. Influenced by Nikolai Lossky's intuitivist philosophy, neo-Kantians' ideas, Hartmann's ontology and philosophical anthropology, and also by phenomenological philosophy, Sesemann wrote numerous articles in German and Russian on philosophical idealism, classical and modern epistemology, logic, and aesthetics.

In 1923 he was offered a professorship at the University of Lithuania. Sesemann moved to Lithuania and remained a towering figure for decades — in logic, aesthetics, and the history of philosophy. Exiled to Siberia after World War II, he returned to Lithuania after several years and taught philosophy at the University of Vilnius. This was nothing short of a miracle, given his background, style, competence, and overall intellectual orientation. Yet his superb lectures, along with his immense personality, long remained a lonely island in the ocean of militant and doctrinaire Marxism.

Botz-Bornstein pioneers in mapping Sesemann's philosophical thought. Linking it to neo-Kantian and phenomenological influences, Botz-Bornstein reveals Hartmann's critical ontology, Henri Bergson's intuitivism, and Mikhail Bakhtin's formalism as Sesemann's points of departure when dealing with such issues as experience, reality, time, duration, matter and form,

and poetics. Yet a readership has to know that a theorist who subscribed the points made by the Russian Formalists consequently placed himself in a difficult situation, since Russian Formalism, first and foremost, was a revolt against the uniformity of an all-embracing Marxist-Leninist doctrine with its simplistic epistemology, fictitious ontology, and vulgar sociology of art.

Therefore, Sesemann, admitting that 'the Formalists are absolutely right in insisting that poetics . . . should above all flow out of linguistics, and that for this reason every chapter of the science of language should correspond to a distinct chapter of theoretical poetics' (21), sounds much in tune with great Russian linguists and literary scholars who developed new trajectories of thought and interpretation in the humanities. Yet it transcends aesthetics and therefore bears a distinctly cross-disciplinary character. As Botz-Bornstein points out, 'Sesemann's "Formalism" is an aesthetic one, and one can locate it even in those domains that are quite removed from aesthetics (e.g., psychology)' (21).

Sesemann also shared with Bakhtin the notion of style. As Botz-Bornstein writes, 'Sesemann defines style as a quantity which has an inner link with the . . . living world attitude . . . and which is thus dynamic because it is determined by real life. In this sense, for both Sesemann and Bakhtin, aesthetic form or artistic expression are neither engendered through "inner life" alone, nor do they depend on life's "objective structures;" they must be seen as a communication which an individual, creative mind entertains with the "things" that he finds in his external environment' (45-6).

Although Botz-Bornstein's book is small in terms of page number, it is a marvelous read, rich in scope and impeccable in terms of documentation and scholarly precision. In addition, it is supplemented with unique photographs from various periods of Sesemann's life. Last but not least, the book offers five valuable appendixes: Sesemann's articles 'Socrates and the Problem of Self-Knowledge' (1925) and 'On the Nature of the Poetic Image' (1925), Lev Karsavin's article 'The Foundations of Politics' (1927) (all three writings translated from Russian into English by Botz-Bornstein), 'A Letter by Henri Parland from Kaunas' (by Sesemann's nephew, the eminent Finnish-Swedish poet Henri Parland [1908-1930]), and a bibliography of Sesemann's works.

What is missing in Botz-Bornstein's otherwise landmark study is an analysis of Sesemann's works in Lithuanian. Needless to say, Lithuanian scholars can hardly expect their Western European or North American counterparts to master the language of a small country for minor scholarly objectives. Yet the fact remains that Sesemann's *Estetika (Aesthetics)*, written in Lithuanian and published posthumously by his young colleagues, is a major philosophical contribution. Unable to reconstruct Sesemann's philosophy of art and aesthetics as a whole, Botz-Bornstein had to confine himself to the analysis of Sesemann's earlier works written in German and Russian. Botz-Bornstein admits this though (17), expressing his regrets over accessibility of *Estetika* only in Lithuanian.

Still, we can end this review on a note conveying good news: *Estetika* has been translated into English and published by Rodopi in 2007.

**Leonidas Donskis**
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**Peter Carruthers**
*The Architecture of the Mind: Massive Modularity and the Flexibility of Thought.* To-
ronto and New York: Oxford University
Press 2006.
Pp. 480.
CDN$144.00/US$139.50
(cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-19-920708-4);
CDN$60.00/US$60.00
(paper ISBN-13: 978-0-19-920707-7).

Recent cognitive developmental psychology lend support to the idea that the mind consists of distinct domain-specific modules (e.g., a folk physics, a folk biology, and a folk psychological mind-reading module), rather than a single all-purpose reasoning system. In evolutionary psychology, it is popular to as-sume that there are different cognitive modules which evolved as adapta-tions meeting different evolutionary problems (e.g., a mate recognition and a cheater detection module). Yet different notions of 'module' might be used by different cognitive scientists; and massive modularity — the idea that the whole mind consists of a large number of substantially dissociated modules — is quite controversial, and clearly denied, e.g., by proponents of distributed connectionism. In this book Carruthers offers a detailed defense of the mas-sive modularity hypothesis, based on an impressive review of the literature in cognitive and evolutionary psychology. The book is divided into two parts. Chapters 1-3 lay out Carruthers' notion of module and argue that the mind is massively modular in this sense. Chapters 4-7 address how to account for the flexibility and creativity of human theoretical and practical reasoning. This is a major issue for any account of the mind, but flexibility is particularly chal-lenging for a proponent of massive modularity, given the idea that a module can only hold content specific to its domain and has limited connections to other modules.

According to the influential work of Jerry Fodor, a module 1) is domain-specific, 2) is tied to particular brain-structures, 3) mandatorily processes appropriate input and cannot be turned off by voluntary control, 4) involves

internal processing inaccessible to other systems, 5) is informationally encapsulated (cannot draw on any information held external to it apart from its input), 6) produces non-conceptual output, and 7) is swift in its processing. This notion of a module is tied to perceptual systems, and cannot possibly be meant by a proponent of the idea that all cognitive systems are modules. Consequently, Carruthers puts forward a notion of 'module' that basically consists of the first four of the above properties (assuming that virtually all modules are domain-specific in the sense of being turned on by specific kinds of input). A variant of the fifth property may apply to many modules, in that while a module may query any possible information from other systems — though only a limited amount — it usually cannot be affected by most of the external information in one run (Chapter 1). Massive modularity in this sense is supported by two arguments. The argument from design is based on the idea that designed systems (including biological systems designed by evolution) that are complex are modular in their organization. The better supported argument from animals maintains that animal cognitive systems are organized modularly (Chapter 2), and the argument is that the additional cognitive features of humans consist of additional modules, rather a holistic general reasoning system (Chapter 3). Carruthers discusses in length evidence concerning memory and motivational systems, belief-desire and practical reasoning systems in animals, and additional cognitive systems in humans, e.g., mind-reading and linguistic abilities. This yields a detailed picture of cognitive architecture that clearly exhibits a good deal of modularity, at least in Carruthers' (admittedly) weak sense.

The second part of the book breaks new ground by proposing empirically grounded yet novel ideas about the relation of human reasoning systems and their processing in order to account for the creativity of human cognition (Chapter 5), the cognitive basis of scientific reasoning (Chapter 6) and distinctively human practical reasoning (Chapter 7). Carruthers distinguishes different ways in which cognition is flexible: flexibility of action, sensitivity to the environmental context, reasoning independent of external stimuli, and the ability to combine different contents (Chapter 4). He addresses each of these issues in turn. While it is impossible to present his insightful account and critique of alternative models in a few sentences, a major idea is that reasoning is organized in feedback loops where the output of some modules is 'globally broadcast', i.e., posted on a common bulletin board so that other modules can use some of it as input and globally broadcast their output. This is, among other things, crucial for the effective mental rehearsal of actions (including linguistic behaviour), which plays a central role in Carruthers' explanation of how creative reasoning is possible in a modular organization. This stimulating discussion goes a long way toward accounting for cognitive flexibility. However, I doubt the success of Carruthers' answer to the question of how distinct contents can be combined. Even if a complex content combining concepts specific to different domains (e.g., of the mind-reading and folk biology modules) is produced and globally broadcast, it does not seem possible that it could effect further cognitive processing as a combined

content, since each module can take only some of this domain-crossing content as its input.

I take issue with Carruthers' employment of innateness and evolutionary psychology. It has been pointed out repeatedly that uses of 'innate' typically conflate quite distinct developmental or evolutionary properties, e.g., a trait being insensitive to the environment in its development, a trait being an evolutionary adaptation, a trait being universal within a species. While Carruthers officially endorses Richard Samuels' definition according to which an innate feature is a cognitively primitive feature (that cannot be explained psychologically), his discussion sometimes moves freely among other properties tied to this notion (161, 346), illustrating again how entrenched the meaning of 'innate' is and how likely its use is to continue prompting fallacious inferences. Moreover, rigorous evolutionary biology first establishes the existence of a feature in extant species, and then works toward an evolutionary explanation of this fact. Yet Carruthers follows the dubious practice of some evolutionary psychologists of using evolutionary ideas to postulate ('predict') modules in extant humans, rather than of establishing their existence by experimental evidence, thereby misusing evolution in an attempt to compensate for his hypothesis about cognitive structure being insufficiently supported by psychological experiments (198).

Given the gargantuan effort of laying out an overall architecture of the mind, not every one of Carruthers' hypotheses can be sufficiently backed by argument combined with existing experimental evidence. Yet even if one disagrees with his overall tenet — massive modularity – this book offers a well-grounded account of the structure and relations of several cognitive systems, which should also intrigue cognitive scientists and trigger critical responses. The philosophical reader will receive, among other things, grounds for expecting continuing fruitful interaction between philosophers and scientists, and be prompted to look forward to future empirical research on the mind.

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**Alfred Claassen**
*An Inquiry into the Philosophical*
*Foundations of the Human Sciences.*
New York: Peter Lang 2007.
Pp. 277.
US$39.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-8204-8179-1).

In this book, Claassen attempts to re-engage the project of foundational accounts of the sciences, in this case, the human sciences. He breaks down his examination of the foundations of the human sciences into three sections. In the first, he examines what he terms the four 'basic' dimensions of 'the human', which, we are informed, is one of three fundamental realms of reality, inert things and living things being the other two. Having laid the groundwork of the four basic human dimensions — reflexivity, consummatory/instrumental, ideal/real, individuality/collectivity — Claassen introduces the 'complex' dimensions in the second section. These are represented overall as a tension between universalism and sectoralism. Claassen then proceeds to delineate the nature and forms of the universal. The third section continues this characterization of the universal, with a focus on the 'epistemics of the human sciences'.

Let us consider some of these terms in greater detail, to see what they mean and how the book's argument goes. First, the basic dimensions. Reflexivity here means roughly what it means in general: thought thinking itself. A reflexive capacity to form representations of oneself in self-consciousness, and to govern one's behavior with self-control, surely does capture something of human being, as does the contrast with nonreflexive thought and behavior. But as Claassen points out, since there is no limit in principle to reflection, there are levels of double reflexivity, or self-consciousness of self-consciousness. The increasing levels of reflexivity correspond, he seems to suggest, to a hierarchy of needs in the style of Maslow. Next, the human is structured by the opposition between the consummatory and the instrumental, or ends-in-themselves and means to ends. To this initially non-illuminating characterization, he adds the following oppositions: emotional vs. rational (respectively), spontaneous vs. deliberate, present-oriented vs. future-oriented, unconscious vs. conscious. These distinctions, he asserts, runs through all human phenomena such as perception, thought and action.

At this point, in order to illustrate the way these basic dimensions combine into more elaborate phenomena, Claassen introduces Freudian terminology. The id is consummatory and the ego instrumental, but both are nonreflexive at the initial level. The superego is reflexive and instrumental, but Claassen goes on to introduce not only a 'superid', but super-superegos and super-superids, to correspond to the doubly reflexive levels. He follows a similar course with Tönnies' distinction between community and association, introducing super and super-super levels of each to cover levels of reflexivity. Again the motivation is to show the combination of the consummatory (community) and the instrumental (association) with multiple levels of reflexivity.

The third basic dimension of the human is the contrast between the ideal and the real, which Claassen poses as an extension of Aristotle's distinction between theoretical and practical knowledge. He does not go into much detail on this point, but rather, identifies the ideal as 'what pertains to thought and perception' and the real as 'what pertains to action in the cycle of doing', and goes on to make a number of parallels with distinctions such as the locutionary and the illocutionary, the pure and applied fields, and the 'ivory tower' and the 'real world'. The final dimension of the human is that between individualism and collectivism, or orientation toward the personal and orientation toward the collective. This, he is careful to point out, does not refer to actual individuals and actual collectives, so much as to the fact that in acting or thinking, humans do so sometimes as individuals and sometimes as members of groups.

Heading into the book's second section, Claassen draws attention to what seems to be the central problem that concerns him, sectoralism, or the tendency to settle habitually into one or another of the poles of these basic dimensions. For the basic dimensions represent aspects of human being which few completely exemplify and in which few find any balance; most achieve only a polar one-sidedness. Claassen imagines this to be true both of the range of psychological types generated by his fundamental dimensions and of various sectors of society. He seems to attribute the cause of both social and personal problems to sectoralism, since it introduces divisions into society and leads to social conflict.

The answer to sectoralism is to overcome all partial and one-sided approaches in the whole, or the universal, through a dialectical method. The dialectic Claassen has in mind is the common picture of opposites overcome in a higher resolution and the universal he describes rather vaguely as 'being with the whole', the opposite of sectoralism. Just as sectoralism is the problem, the solution is universalism, the promise of harmony to be achieved in dialectically overcoming the oppositions of sectoralism.

Finally, when in the third part he turns to the epistemology of the social sciences, what appears is a phenomenology capable of incorporating historicism, which starts with Hegel and leads into the twentieth-century phenomenologists. Phenomenology is holist, he claims, in properly seeking to grasp a subject in its entirety and at once, and hence it is putatively suitable to resolving the oppositions of sectoralism. Only thus may the human sciences overcome relativism (or rather, realize that it is not incompatible with the absolute, as Claassen insists) and achieve a unity under philosophy.

It is hard to say what to make of this. The basic concepts are presented with little to no analysis, rather like narrated accounts of these notions via generalized anecdotes illustrating 'what human beings are like'. Although back-cover commentary praises it for its synthesis of a broad sweep of philosophy, the book is really syncretic to a fault, bringing together a menagerie of concepts from disparate sources, but without any account of what is needed and why. I have tried to give examples of this tendency, with the basic dimensions of the consummatory/instrumental and the ideal/real. The explication

of these concepts seems to proceed by simply adding one unhelpful characterization upon another.

So, do these categories reflect basic dimensions of humanity? Claassen claims that all other versions of these basic dimensions reduce to or are metaphors for the ones he presents here, effectively asserting their primacy. Strictly speaking, one can hardly disagree, though one has the sense that this must be because, given how loosely construed they are, anything can be seen as a version of one of these distinctions.

Finally, in spite of the claims to overcome the fragmentation and directionlessness of the human sciences in a new paradigm, the book simply appears naive in its promotion of dialectic and phenomenology as panacea for these ills. On the whole, the claims of this book are thoroughly unconvincing.

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**John Powell Clayton**
*Religions, Reasons and Gods: Essays*
*in Cross-Cultural Philosophy of Religion.*
New York: Cambridge University Press 2006.
Pp. 291.
CDN$115.95/US$100.00
(cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-521-42104-1).

Theistic arguments not only have many uses specific to religions, traditions, and intellectuals, but also seem to have no success in their pre-modern use in providing unimpeachable and universal reasons for the existence of divinity. This observation drove much of Clayton's contributions to the philosophy of religion, here collected in his final work before his death in 2003. He argued that failure to attend to the purposes and contexts in which religious intellectuals use theistic arguments prevents a fulsome appreciation of their significance and possible truth. When one vaults prematurely over these purposes or situations in order to evaluate the truth of such arguments, one has neglected important matters. This volume collects many of his essays on this subject, together with adaptations of his Stanton Lectures. Philosophers of religion, comparative religion, and other interested readers should consider this book.

Analysis of religious arguments and their uses appropriately begins the book. Clayton's purpose emerges from his consideration of the uses to which thinkers put theistic arguments. His many analyses, ranging from Sankara to Thomas Jefferson, from Anselm of Canterbury to Immanuel Kant, all sup-

port the idea that theistic arguments have wide-ranging uses. Almost none of them, in Clayton's view, offer universal reasons that would convince any rational person. Even the Enlightenment thinkers whom Clayton engages — and this includes Kant — demonstrate sensitivity for uses of these arguments that serve to do more than convince. In short, Clayton thinks that theistic arguments have and still serve many purposes beyond offering unimpeachable proof of God's existence.

Even though it seems that Kant closed the door to any use of theistic proof to create conviction, Clayton notes that many of the pre-modern uses of the proofs survive his critical turn. Though stripped of its power to command conviction, the ontological proof still offers a purified form of the concept of God. It shows what is at stake. Many religious intellectuals scorn Kant's evaluation of God's existence as a postulate of practical reason, but according to Clayton in doing so Kant merely used theistic proof as many pre-modern thinkers did. Al-Ghazali presented proofs in order to educate faithful Muslims. On Clayton's reading, no pre-modern, not even Anselm it seems, ever sought to fashion reasons that would survive the immediate use to which it was put. These writers perhaps thought that the context in which they fashioned their argument would extend beyond their own day, but never to all times and places. Clayton identifies several uses for theistic arguments: hermeneutical, edificatory, apologetic, and polemical. These all are directed to specific situations where a range of reasons justify their use that could not apply in other situations. Thus, for instance, Anselm's famous argument does not do what Kant thought it does but, in fact, is an attempt to interpret the Bible and make sense of why the fool can deny God's existence (as is frequently stated in the Book of Psalms). Only subsequent thinkers in modernity excavated the argument to do different work.

These observations require Clayton to step back and develop his method and approach to reasons in religious traditions. He first distinguishes between giving reasons in three situations: within traditions, between religious traditions, and extra religiously. In each of these situations, Clayton urges philosophers of religion sensitively to distinguish further between these several situations. Some arguments for God's existence operate within a space shared between two traditions; others can fit only within the bounds of the religious tradition in which they are offered.

Clayton justifies these distinctions by appealing to what he called a 'maxim of reticence', that is, a sort of pragmatic version of Edmund Husserl's *epoché* or bracketing. However, he does not advocate these three distinctions as permanent boundaries, as some followers of Wittgenstein have done. If that sort of incommensurability between communities held, the question of the truth of any religious claim would be forever deferred, or would be significant only within each tradition, and would be arcane to the other situations, publics, and arenas of interrelation. All religious communities would be incommensurable to each other.

In place of the search for common ground or mutual commensurability, Clayton advocates that each community seek defensible differences. He fol-

lows the example of medieval Indo-Tibetan vada traditions, in which intellectuals of many religious schools disputed in public. Of course, participants wanted to 'win' such debates but, Clayton claims, the actual result was a further clarification of the logic and position proper to each school. Positions that survived became worthy darsannas, schools that can stand in public. Disputants tested each other's claims relative to the merits of their own or other positions. This approach differs considerably from the demand to test religious claims from the perspective of universal reason. One does not give up one's convictions unilaterally but only in the context of a back-and-forth engagement with another intellectual tradition. There is no completely neutral space; the price of entry into Clayton's view of public conversation is conviction, not neutrality, and one must bring a willingness to have one's convictions contested.

Clayton's chapter on Anselm merits close attention. Originally published separately, this article brings together Clayton's method of reasoning and his attention to the goal, use or purpose of proof. He proposes, first of all, that in shaping a judgment about a conclusion, one attend to the argument's use. In Anselm's case it turns out that the purpose of the argument is edificatory and hermeneutical. This, he tells us, circumscribes the scope of Anselm's claims and alters the grounds on which his argument is evaluated by philosophers of religion.

As indicated by the editors in a marginal note, all of this directs Clayton more towards the orbit of pragmatic views about religion than views involving the correspondence theory of truth or what some philosophers of religion call 'critical realism'. Clayton states in a shorthand note completed by the editors: 'Not committed to holding that correspondence theory of truth is adequate in rel(igious) contexts, pragmatic theory may be more appropriate. Not everyone will be happy with this. Not even all pragmatists, some of whom deny that prag(matisim) offers a "theory" of truth' (3). It lies now to others to develop his maxim of reticence and defend it in ways that follow through on this note. Clayton's approach to making sense of religious claims and inter-religious dialogue requires Clifford Geertz's 'thick descriptions' of not just culture but argumentation, and it requires a more pragmatic approach. This approach merits further investigation and attention. Clayton seems to have attempted a middle position between modern foundational reason and sectarian non-foundational reason.

Anne M. Blackburn and Thomas D. Carroll prepared this posthumous volume, some of the papers of which Clayton had already published. In all but a few sections, Clayton speaks for himself. Blackburn and Carroll in many cases completed the scholarly documentation of the text. They describe the history of the texts and introduce each section of essays. The resulting volume is widely accessible for undergraduates and interested general readers, and is highly recommended for all scholars.

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**Alice Crary, ed.**
*Wittgenstein and the Moral Life:*
*Essays in Honor of Cora Diamond.*
Cambridge, MA: MIT Press 2007.
Pp. 409.
US$36.00 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-262-07282-3).

Part I (the 'Wittgenstein' section) of this book contains five essays that explore Wittgenstein's work from the perspective of the 'New Wittgenstein' or 'Diamond-Conant' reading of Wittgenstein's corpus. Four of the five contributors, James Conant, Juliet Floyd, Hilary Putnam and David Finkelstein, all contributed to a similar collection, *The New Wittgentsein* (2000). Three of the six contributors to the shorter, second part of this volume, 'The Moral Life', also contributed to that former collection. The contributions to Part 2 here, however, concern primarily Diamond's significance to moral philosophy, which, as Crary remarks, 'bears the imprint of philosophical lessons she derives from Wittgenstein' (9). These latter papers illustrate Diamond's move beyond morality, conceived exclusively as concerned with moral judgements, toward the role that literature has to play in moral instruction. This tradition, however, of which David Hume is a precursor, seems more emblematic of Rorty than Wittgenstein, and the links presented here to Wittgenstein's thought are somewhat tenuous, as, in certain cases, are the links to Diamond's work itself. Martha Nussbaum's paper on Fontane's *Der Stechlin*, for example, and Stephen Mulhall's on the character of Bernard Williams, offer little by way of an exposition of Diamond's ethics. I note this, however, merely to inform the reader, rather than to criticize the papers themselves, which stand alone as sufficiently exemplary of the role that literature plays (or can play) in ethical decision making. Below I focus primarily on Part 1, which concerns the most famous (or infamous) aspect of Diamond's work, and furnishes us with the most novel developments in this book.

While Crary is not incorrect in her introductory claim that one of Diamond's accomplishments is 'her contribution to the study of Wittgenstein's — early and later — philosophy', it is nevertheless true that it is with regard to her depiction of the early Wittgenstein that Diamond has been most revolutionary and influential. What this entails, in sum, is that themes once held to be indicative primarily of the later Wittgenstein are applied to the Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus* period. Specifically, Diamond has been instrumental in fashioning the early Wittgenstein as an anti-metaphysical thinker. She thus denies the traditionally perceived 'rupture' in the development of Wittgenstein's thought, dependent as that rupture is on a later rejection of early metaphysical tendencies. Crary remarks of this novel approach that 'the reading is sometimes said to be inconsistent with things that Wittgenstein, and those close to him, said about the *Tractatus* around the time of its composition' (8). Diamond's approach thereby implicitly condones Robert Ackermann's denial (in *Wittgenstein's City*) of the 'hermeneutical coercion of those who trace their authority of interpretation to personal acquaintance'

(1988, x-xi). The very existence of the 'New Wittgenstein', to this reviewer at least, thus rests solely upon the rejection of an historicist methodology, to the extent that not only Wittgenstein's contemporaries but Wittgenstein himself is denied a privileged position in the unveiling of his own thought. From the traditionalist perspective, it is a criticism of the 'New Wittgenstein' movement in general that this book serves to perpetuate this tendency to separate text and author, in a Barthian consideration of the text as existing in its own space. Peter Carruthers' *The Metaphysics of the* Tractatus (1990) can be taken to illustrate this tendency. Referring to the criticisms of the *Tractatus* contained in the later *Philosophical Investigations*, Carruthers writes, 'I shall not attempt to judge whether Wittgenstein intended them as such. It is possible that he did, and that he is thereby shown to have misunderstood his earlier work' (161-2). James Conant, in 'Mild Mono-Wittgensteinianism', the longest and most significant paper in Crary's collection, makes pointed reference to 'what the author of the *Tractatus* himself thought he was up to' 41).

Once one considers that 'New' readings have here and elsewhere taken recourse to the notion of Wittgenstein's having misunderstood himself, the plight of the traditionalist in the 'Old'/'New' schism becomes fully apparent. For given that Diamond is to be considered an authority on Wittgenstein's work above Wittgenstein himself, what room remains for positive exegetical evidence of any sort? In 'Was He Trying to Whistle It?', the final paper of the aforementioned *The New Wittgenstein*, Peter Hacker remarks that 'it would be instructive of Diamond and her followers to inform us what would count as sufficient or telling evidence against their account' (381). The implication that nothing could seems justified. Furthermore, the fact that dialogue across the broadening schism has ground to a halt is easily explicable. There is, in truth, no playing field on which traditionalists and post-modernists may argue. They avail themselves of the same terminology but they are, in a very real sense, speaking different languages, playing according to different rules of method. Whether or not the rejection of an historicist methodology, however, and the consequential imperviousness to falsification, amounts to a criticism of the 'New Wittgenstein' approach, is a question which involves a value judgment which each reader must make for him/herself. This reviewer disagrees with the 'New' subordination of traditional Tractarian scholarship, emblematic of all commentators who knew Wittgenstein at this time, to the status of 'ineffability readings' (8), but does so in awareness that any such criticism rests upon a particular philosophical predisposition for historicist and exegetical research, which is itself under scrutiny here.

Certainly, it is no criticism of this book that it argues from a divergent perspective, for it does not propose to do otherwise. Equally, while the absence of a dissenting voice, such as Hacker's in *The New Wittgenstein*, is sadly amiss, it would be wrong to expect it in a collection edited in Cora Diamond's honor. While space does not permit an exegesis of each paper individually, all of the papers in Part 1 contribute something of merit to extending *The New Wittgenstein* argument. Kremer and Floyd both offer 'New' readings of the

Tractarian gesagt/gezeigt distinction, traditionally conceived of as fundamental to the ineffabilist approach. Putnam and Finkelstein both deal with the less controversial application of 'New' readings to the later Wittgenstein (Finkelstein utilising Wittgenstein only as illustrative of a particular view of holism, which he juxtaposes to Donald Davidson's view in *Rational Animals*). While all are concerned with an exposition of this or that particular aspect of Wittgenstein's thought in the context of the 'New Wittgenstein' cause, it is Conant's lengthy 'Mild Mono-Wittgensteinianism' that makes the greatest advance over past scholarship. Having here coined the phrase 'mono-Wittgensteinianism' as a reference to the resolute denial of the traditionally postulated distinction between the early and the late Wittgenstein, Conant proceeds to draw a further distinction between mild, severe, and zealous mono-Wittgensteinians, reserving a place for himself in the mild mono-Wittgensteinian camp. Conant has complicated any reading of his paper by the suitably ironic ploy of writing it partly under the pseudonymous guise of Johannes Climacus. Irony aside, however, there is a degree of truth in Climacus' summation of one particular aim of Conant's paper: 'To lament that the first phase of the dialogue between the infidels and the church stalled, thereby causing what he seems to imagine is a great schism' (35).

The greatest merit of this collection is that it finally moves beyond the fruitless conflict of method that has hitherto characterized whatever dialogue exists between traditional (church) and 'New' (infidel) scholarship. In proposing that the denial of a 'rupture' in Wittgenstein's thought can be characterized as mild, Conant has fashioned the difference of perspective as one of degree rather than kind, and beyond the truth or falsity of this claim, Conant does make a compelling case for the continuation of discourse between the opposing camps. Although as a traditionalist I remain staunchly opposed to both the method and the conclusions of 'New Wittgenstein' scholarship, I deem the growing tendency to ignore this scholarship outright to be detrimental to the advancement of Wittgenstein scholarship in its broadest sense. After all, one does not need to accept the 'New' account of Wittgensteinian holism in order to condone the attempt to achieve a more holistic account of Wittgenstein's thought as not only justified, but necessary. As Conant points out, traditional Tractarian scholarship has of yet failed to decipher whether the text is realist or idealist at base (88). While one may not follow Conant in his thesis that it is neither, and that all such positive philosophical doctrine is here designed, in the end, to collapse in on itself, it would be a mistake to deny that Conant's criticism of traditionalists is both valid and astute. An alternative account might suppose that the *Tractatus* is both realist and idealist, that we are not here presented with a double rejection, as with the Nietzschean transcendence of morality and immorality, but rather with a double acceptance. This would amount to a rejection of the proposed 'New' holism, without a denial that the general goal of attaining an holistic account of Wittgenstein's thought is of the utmost importance. In sum, the fact that a broad swath of Wittgenstein scholars remain fundamentally opposed to 'New' answers does nothing to detract from the perceptiveness of 'New' criti-

cisms and questions, and, as such, this volume is of universal significance to scholars of Diamond and Wittgenstein alike, regardless of one's philosophical predisposition. Though it is clear from the outset that traditionalists will not adhere to the central premises of this book, nevertheless it makes a compelling case for continued discourse between historicist and post-modern approaches, a fact that warrants no small amount of commendation.

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**Owen Flanagan**
*The Really Hard Problem.*
Cambridge, MA: MIT Press 2007.
Pp. 301.
US$27.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-262-06264-0).

A quick glance at the title of this book suggests a couple of possibilities. It might be about consciousness; after all, that is what David Chalmers has called the 'hard problem' and Ned Block the 'harder problem'. Or, the title might be intentionally polemical in restoring semantics to its rightful place against the usual view of it as the 'easier' problem. Neither interpretation, however, identifies Flanagan's main concern. Rather, his 'really hard problem' has to be found elsewhere, in the meaning of life and in what it takes to fashion a flourishing life. These issues are 'really hard' not only because they are 'existentially pressing', but also because there may not be answers to them at all, much less satisfactory ones.

Indeed, the search for the causes and constituents of the meaning of life is a really pressing problem, especially at present when the mind sciences often yield a picture of persons that is disenchanting. With the emergence of the neurosciences and cognitive psychology, and their respective objectives and causal accounts of the mind and of personhood, our conception of the self is threatened: the self is being gradually pushed out of the big picture, along with its cherished properties like autonomy, freedom, consciousness, and meaning. Flanagan's timely book is an attempt to rescue us from this despondent situation. As he argues, not only can we make sense of the idea of achieving eudaimonia, but we can also do so from within a naturalistic framework. To arrive at a science of human flourishing, Flanagan urges that we take seriously what various fields and traditions in its inquiry have to offer and to integrate their findings. The resulting 'eudaimonistic scientia' would

then consist of an eclectic blend of claims furnished not only by neuroscientists and evolutionary biologists, but also by practitioners of meditational traditions originating in South Asia, such as Buddhism.

How can finite beings like us live a meaningful life in this material world? Chapter 1 lays out the framework for answering such a question. The idea is to conduct an empirical-normative inquiry into the nature, causes and conditions of human flourishing (eudaimonics). According to Flanagan, how a person's life is faring largely depends on how she conceives and makes sense of things around her, which in turn is shaped by how she relates to the six salient 'spaces of meaning': art, science, technology, ethics, politics, and spirituality. While this list is not exhaustive, it does carve out the main spaces in which we 'weave a tapestry of sense and meaning by participation in various subspaces within (them)' (14). We may, for instance, paint, take part in town hall meetings, meditate, or do charity work, all of which activities impart some meaning to our lives. The extent to which a person's life is going well depends on her overall 'psycho-poetic performance', that is, on how creative she is in making meanings from these spaces and how well she negotiates conflicts that may arise from them.

Given that people's psycho-poetic performances can vary, there are innumerable ways of living a good life, and just as many of living a mediocre or awful one. Is there anything substantive to be said about how eudaimonia is best achieved? Flanagan returns a positive answer in Chapter 2. To live meaningfully, we need to heed Plato's suggestion of orienting ourselves towards the Good, the True, and the Beautiful, but do so without simultaneously taking on its metaphysical baggage. Flanagan's strategy to ground these Platonic *eidos* is to show that they are universal features of human beings that have evolved long ago in our 'cognitive-affective-conative constitution'. For instance, he notes that parents care for their young (good), reliably detect where sustenance is (truth), and appreciate sunrises (beautiful) (41). It would seem, then, that on such a view, everyone would achieve *eudaimonia*. Not so. As Flanagan argues, Eastern and Western 'wisdom traditions' have indicated that our constitution is a 'mixed bag' containing both bad seeds (selfishness) as well as good ones (benevolence, justice). To be *eudaimon*, we have to achieve a 'harmonious reconciliation among the three broad Platonic ends', allowing the good seeds to grow and suppressing the bad ones (53).

As mentioned, *eudaimonia* can be achieved in part by reconciling conflicts that may arise among the various spaces of meaning. Chapter 3 illustrates one such conflict, namely, that between science and religion (specifically, Buddhism). Take 'karmic causality' for example, a type of causation that concerns the social and moral effects of human actions. At first glance, Buddhism appears to be in conflict with science, as the former holds that karmic causality is distinct from the 'ordinary' scientific conception of causation. However, as Flanagan argues, 'karma' means 'action' and it 'refers to the intentional acts of sentient beings' (73). As such, karmic causation is simply 'sentient-being' causation and thus, a subtype of 'ordinary causation'. Tensions arise only

if Buddhism maintains further that consciousness can persist after death and continues to reap what it has previously sowed. According to Flanagan, this is where the two parties disagree. The mind sciences have already provided good reasons that consciousness has a neural correlate. Moreover, if consciousness floated free from the brain, it would at best be epiphenomenal, and thus, unable to exert any causal influence. Despite disagreement, the upshot is that Buddhism and science can engage in a profitable dialogue.

In Chapter 4, Flanagan is concerned to show how eudaimonics can be normative, that is, how it is possible for us to say that 'some ways of living and being are better than others' (107). His suggestion is that we 'survey the views and aspirations of the "many" and the "wise"' within a particular culture or tradition and form a hypothesis or conception about the causes, conditions and the constituents of an excellent life. We then critically examine, adjust and test the hypothesis, with the hope of achieving reflective equilibrium. According to Flanagan, going through such a process is a necessary condition of subjective flourishing. However, a potential problem arises: how might we adjudicate among competing hypotheses, ones stemming from different cultures and traditions? Flanagan's solution is to put these conceptions into a serious 'competition across space and time' to see whether they pass tests of inter-cultural comparison. Such a method, which he calls 'wider reflective equilibrium', affords us an objective way to check for 'virtues, norms and rules'. This wider process, in his view, is a necessary condition of objective flourishing.

Chapter 5 is concerned with happiness within the context of the mind sciences. First, Flanagan aims to advocate neurophenomenology: identify as many philosophical conceptions and meanings of happiness as possible in the various traditions, and then look at the brain activities 'within and across advocates and practitioners of (these) traditions to see what similarities and differences our mapping reveals' (167). Having such mappings would provide us with a better understanding of the constituents and underpinnings of happiness, and allow us to 'speak with maximal precision about what practices . . . are thought to produce what sorts of specific positive states of mind and body' (168). Second, Flanagan challenges the idea, recently asserted by some psychologists, that 'positive illusions' are essential for leading a healthy and happy mental life. For if it turns out to be true, it would go against the Platonic conception that *eudaimonia* is achieved in part by tracking truth. According to Flanagan, the data and the meta-analysis in the relevant studies are misleading, reflecting only group effects and, thus, ignoring happy individuals who do not suffer from such illusions.

The closing chapter discusses how spirituality can be naturalized. According to Flanagan, theistic traditions function primarily to alleviate people's worries concerning the origins of the world, and to serve as some sort of 'superglue' to bind our moral conceptions. However, both functions, he notes, can be retained without subscribing to supernaturalism. For instance, adopting an 'expressive' theism permits us to think of a 'very complex, exciting creation myth' and tell it as such. So long as we are not asserting it, we are

not putting forth anything that can be evaluated as true or false. Regarding morality, Flanagan suggests that the glue to unify our moral conceptions (e.g., universal altruism and compassion) can be derived from the non-theistic aspects of Buddhism (the four abodes) and 'Jesusism' (the golden rule), as well as from consequentialsim (promotion of the greatest amount of well-being).

This book is a delightful, refreshing, and engaging read: it is simultaneously a treatise on the excellent life, an instructional guide on how to naturalize *eudaimonia*, and a work in comparative philosophy. As such, it should appeal to a wide audience. However, whether the really hard problem can ultimately be given an adequate solution remains to be seen, as there are arguably other 'hard' problems that arise in the approach that Flanagan suggests (some of which he notes): incommensurability with respect to doing comparative work in diverse traditions, the prospect of fine-grained phenomenological differences showing up in brain scans, and the psychological viability of his naturalized spirituality. Nevertheless, Flanagan's approach is instructive and promising, offering us a foray into the exploration of the excellent life.

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**Peter Goldie** and
**Elisabeth Schellekens, eds.**
*Philosophy and Conceptual Art.*
Toronto and New York: Oxford University
Press 2007.
Pp. 288.
CDN$96.00/US$74.00
(cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-19-928555-6).

This volume consists of thirteen philosophical essays on conceptual art plus a contribution by the British 'Art & Language' Conceptualists Michael Baldwin, Charles Harrison, and Mel Ramsden. It is a valuable addition to the literature of philosophical aesthetics, and should be of interest to members of the artworld. The collection demonstrates why the many deep and complex issues raised by works of conceptual art deserve serious philosophical consideration.

The work consists of four parts: 'Conceptual Art as a Kind of Art', 'Conceptual Art and Aesthetic Value', 'Conceptual Art, Knowledge and Un-

derstanding', and 'Appreciating Conceptual Art'. Although the work is so divided, essays in one part often deal with subjects covered elsewhere in the book. In addition to the four categories cited, several other topics, germane to conceptual art, appear frequently. These include the dematerialization of the art object and the emphasis on ideas rather than perceptible entities; the relation of perception and conception to conceptual works; conceptual art and Greenbergian Modernism; the importance of Marcel Duchamp's readymades to conceptual art, creativity and conceptual art; and the experience of and aesthetic reaction to works of conceptual art.

In their excellent introduction, the editors distinguish between Conceptual art (capital 'c'), as 'the movement that took place roughly between 1966 and 1972' (xi), and conceptual art (small 'c'), that 'is less historical and more philosophical or conceptual' (xii). Although it is common in critical practice to write 'Conceptual art', i.e., capital 'c', the lower case form of 'conceptual' is used throughout this review to mark what is recognized in the editors' more inclusive use of the term. Although Goldie and Schellekens realize that the multifarious nature of conceptual artworks precludes listing the criteria that an artwork must have to be conceptual (xi), they nevertheless list five features that characterize conceptual art: 1) emphasizing dematerialized ideas over 'sensory pleasure and beauty'; 2) challenging traditional notions of identity and definition and questioning artistic agency; 3) art-making as a kind of art criticism that not only finds Greenbergian Modernism suspect, but that, as critical rather than a commodity, is 'anti-consumerist and anti-establishment'; 4) the use of new media that 'rejects traditional artistic media'; and 5) using meaning or 'semantic representation' to replace 'illustrative representation' (xii-xiii).

Space restrictions allow me to mention just an idea or two from each essay, and it should not be inferred that there is nothing of interest or value in the essays I don't cite: there is not a single article in this collection not worth reading and reflecting on.

Although conceptual art has been with us for over forty years now, it has largely been neglected or misunderstood by philosophers. The explanation of this, according to Matthew Kieran, is that 'contemporary philosophical aesthetics . . . is primarily reception based' (198). That is a problem for engaging with an art form that emphasizes ideas or dematerialized entities over experience of a perceptual object (199). Philosophers who reject conceptual art do so, according to Kieran, because they have rejected the emphasis in Romanticism on 'the creative role of the human mind' (200). Kieran rightly points out that this is unduly parochial, and he indicates what philosophy has to gain from taking conceptual art seriously.

We are accustomed to aesthetic experience not only being linked to, but being *of*, perceptual objects. And we typically think of aesthetic value in the visual arts tradition, from which conceptual art arises, as being attributed to visual objects. However, Schellekens defends the view that ideas can have aesthetic value, and she finds attempts to deny such value to ideas, inside and outside of art, unconvincing. For Schellekens, an idea valued, or the cognitive

value of a conceptual work, need not be propositional, but may be experiential, as when we 'enter into a very thought-provoking relationship with (a conceptual work) . . . and engage in an emphatic and imaginative manner with the idea it sets out to convey' (83). It is the 'ability (of conceptual art) to yield experiential knowledge that saves (it) from being superfluous' (83). Conceptual art is often taken to be anti-aesthetic, but Diarmuid Costello investigates the sense in which conceptual art might not only be aesthetic, but aesthetic in a way that may bear an interesting relation to Kant's thinking about the expression of aesthetic ideas by works of art. This is provocative since Kant is taken by Greenberg to be the first Modernist, and conceptual art is typically taken to be a negative reaction to Greenbergian theory.

Anything with which an artwork is meant to be identified, including an idea or immaterial entity, depends on a perceptual or experiential object for that intended identification to be understood. How then does perception or experience figure in the apprehension of conceptual works? For Peter Lamarque, '[t]here must be something that counts as perceiving (or experiencing) conceptual art *as conceptual art*' (12, his italics). Lamarque identifies 'empiricist' and 'distinctness' principles on which the distinction of an artwork from a quotidian object or another work depends. Gregory Currie maintains that looking is important to some works of conceptual art, but that works of visual conceptual art differ from traditional visual works in how they relate to perception. In traditional works, appearance has priority and the action that resulted in the work informs looking at the work. In visual conceptual works, the emphasis is on the act of the artist rather than the result of that act, and the appearance of the work is important in enabling 'one to grasp something important about that act' (48).

Derek Matravers agrees with Charles Harrison that any understanding of conceptual art must take into account its relation to Greenbergian Modernism. There are two possibilities here: The first is that conceptual art is a continuation of the Modernist project in non-traditional form after the supposed exhaustion of painting (21-2). The second is that conceptual art is a reaction to and repudiation of Modernism. Matravers thinks that the second view is correct and that the dematerialization of the art object recognizes the labefaction of the Modernist emphasis on a certain kind of perceptual object. David Davies says that the radical discontinuities thought to exist between perceptual and conceptual art 'are closely related, and are only properly understood as inflections of underlying continuities in both the visual and non-visual (conceptual) arts' (141). What is distinctive of a conceptual artwork is that, to be appreciated, it requires a particular complex kind of narrative that Davies calls *'identifying'*, a narrative not of the kind that is necessary for appreciation of a traditional artwork (152-3).

For Robert Hopkins, perception does not play the same role in appreciating conceptual art that it does in perceptual art, and the 'artistic interest (of conceptual art) . . . does not turn on the precise nature of its base properties' (66), 'the properties on which its artistic properties depend' (60). Because conceptual art is not to be appreciated in perception, Hopkins says that it

communicates by frustrating expectations (65). Conceptual art developed historically from painting and sculpture, and Minimalism in particular, and the failure to appreciate conceptual art, Dominic Lopes says, comes from supposing that it belongs 'to the same art form as paintings and sculptures (when) . . . it does not' (246). To appreciate conceptual art it should be understood as 'an art form in its own right' (255).

Works of conceptual art, in depending on some perceptible entity to convey or embody an idea, raise the question of the relation of the idea to the perceptible entity on which it depends. Carolyn Wilde's essay examines how Joseph Kosuth's *One and Three Chairs* 'requires us to consider how meaning is embodied within the work of art' (119). Goldie cites Kosuth's work as raising 'many interesting philosophical questions about representation, about tokens and types, and about what is real' (168). For Goldie, such works have cognitive value of a kind that is achieved *'in an artistic way*, and not a discursive or philosophical way' (167, Goldie's italics). Conceptual works do not have cognitive value in the manner of traditional art, but they 'can have value by helping us think about difficult philosophical ideas and by enhancing our intellectual dispositions' (169). Kathleen Stock distinguishes propositional and visual imagining, and asserts that 'imagination can be important to the comprehension of conceptual works' (173). Stock maintains, against Sartre and Wittgenstein, that visual imagining can result in knowledge, and she thinks that such knowledge may be important in certain conceptual works. However, visual imagination does not commit us to understanding conceptual works that are meant to be anti-aesthetic 'as quasi-aesthetic objects' (173).

Margaret Boden claims that conceptual art results from 'combinatorial creativity' that 'involves the generation of unfamiliar (and interesting) combinations of familiar ideas' (219). She lists several instances of conceptual modifications of artistic conventions that 'are cases of combinatorial creativity' (232) and that fit many instances of conceptual art that she cites in her essay. The combinatorial creativity of certain conceptual works gives them aesthetic value, and 'the richer the associations, and the deeper the relevance, the greater the value of the novel combinations' (234).

There are many novel and creative ideas in this book, often rich in associations, and hence of great value.

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**Alvin I. Goldman**
*Simulating Minds: The Philosophy,*
*Psychology, and Neuroscience of Mindreading.*
Toronto and New York: Oxford University
Press 2006.
Pp. 384.
CDN$39.50
(cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-19-513892-4);
CDN$22.50/US$19.95
(paper ISBN-13: 978-0-19-536983-0).

In this book, Goldman provides the most comprehensive defense of a simu-
lation-based theory of mindreading to date. Mindreading is the activity of
attributing mental states: representing an individual as having certain men-
tal states. We can distinguish between theories of mindreading, theories of
the nature of mental states, and theories about the acquisition of mindread-
ing skills. Goldman frequently touches on metaphysical and developmental
questions, but the main focus is mindreading: which processes are opera-
tive and which abilities are exercised when we read the minds of others (or
ourselves)? There are three main positions: the rationality theory (RT), the
theory-theory (TT), and simulation theory (ST).

RT says, very roughly, that to mindread is to rationalize behavior: to as-
sign mental states that render the target-subject's behavior rational. Accord-
ing to TT, mindreading proceeds by way of inferences from beliefs about the
target's behavior and environment to conclusions about its mental states.
Crucially, these inferences are mediated by knowledge about psychological
laws and generalizations. TT says that mindreading is theoretical reasoning
about mental states. ST denies that, and it denies, most importantly, that
mindreaders must deploy knowledge about psychological laws (explicitly or
implicitly). According to ST, mindreading proceeds by way of simulating the
process that resulted (or is expected to result) in the target-subject's behav-
ior. If we predict a decision, for instance, we first imagine and pretend to have
the same initial mental states. Then we use our own reasoning-mechanism
to make a decision, but instead of executing it, we project the decision onto
the target.

Goldman devotes one chapter to the rejection of RT. One main objection is
that RT cannot capture the attribution of mental states other than proposi-
tional attitudes, as feelings and emotions are not adequately governed by ra-
tionality constraints. The main opponent, however, is TT, which has been the
predominant position in the cognitive sciences, psychology and philosophy.
In two chapters Goldman provides plenty of evidence and argument against
its main versions: the child-scientist theory (CST) and the modularity theory
(MT). It has been argued that the results of so-called false-belief tasks count
in favor of CST, albeit only indirectly. Goldman argues convincingly that
there is a better explanation of the evidence which favors ST. Moreover, CST
faces difficult questions. For instance, if acquiring mindreading skills is real-

ly like constructing a scientific theory, then it is more than surprising that all children acquire the same theory of mind at roughly the same age. MT meets this worry. MT is a form of nativism, and it postulates a specialized and innate mindreading-module. Goldman, however, argues that mindreading does not satisfy the conditions for modularity. Most importantly, it is questionable that mindreading is informationally encapsulated: when we attribute mental states, we sometimes access beliefs about the world, for instance. Further, it is not obvious that modularity would favor TT over ST. Goldman argues that MT and ST are not 'worlds apart', as some have suggested.

There was a focused debate on TT *versus* ST. More recently, though, the rivalry between the two approaches has been questioned and *hybrid* theories have been put forward. Goldman agrees with this approach: the question for him is not whether either TT or ST is true, but whether simulation plays a significant and irreducible role in mindreading. The book defends a ST-TT hybrid, according to which many instances of mindreading are based on simulation, and which allows that some instances may be, or even must be, supplemented by theorizing. ST's proper opponent is not simply TT, but any version of TT which denies or neglects the role of simulation.

Goldman's theory provides a hybrid and a *dual* account of mindreading. In two long chapters, Goldman introduces and defends what he calls lower-level and higher-level simulation-based mindreading. A paradigm example of lower-level mindreading is face-based emotion recognition. Goldman argues for a reconstruction that is based on mirror-neuron mechanisms. Low-level simulation is fast, automatic, and largely beyond the level of consciousness. It does not involve pretense and perspective-taking, but consists only in the fact that the two processes of experiencing a certain mental state and recognizing it in others *resemble* each other in the relevant respects. Evidence comes from experiments and brain-scans, which suggest that recognizing a certain type of emotion, for instance, is to a significant extent realized by the same neural mechanisms that realize experiencing that emotion. Higher-order simulation is usually under voluntary control, accessible to consciousness, and it involves perspective-taking (or enactment-imagination). Goldman presents evidence in support of the claim that we frequently and accurately enact-imagine the situations and mental states of others. Further, empirical evidence concerning egocentric-bias in mindreading supports the ST approach.

In the remaining four chapters, Goldman considers a number of interesting topics, such as the ontogeny and evolution of mindreading skills, mimicry, fantasy and fiction, and moral empathy. Goldman deals with the difficult topic of first-person mindreading, and he suggests that self-attribution is facilitated by a special mechanism for introspection (or self-monitoring). In connection with that, Goldman offers an introspection-based account of our concepts of mental states.

The book introduces an impressive amount of evidence from behavioral and neurosciences, which is presented with clarity, very effectively, and without assuming prior knowledge. In most cases, Goldman presents only as much detail as is necessary in order to see why the evidence supports a

certain conclusion. The downside of this efficiency is that it is sometimes difficult to assess whether the offered account is the best or the only plausible interpretation of the evidence. In some few cases the account is all-too brief. In support of higher-order simulation, for instance, Goldman refers to evidence which shows that both imagination and execution of hand movements are controlled by the opposite hemispheres of the brain. He concludes that 'imagining a hand movement is apparently executed by the same cerebral mechanism that actually executes movements of that hand' (158). But the claim that the same mechanism is operative hardly follows from the fact that the same hemisphere is active. More detail is required.

Many of the arguments are based on reflective analysis of certain interpretations of scientific evidence. But there is also a lot of philosophy proper here. Some of it is helpful conceptual clarification, and some of it is pure philosophical argument. There is, for instance, a response to Shoemaker's argument for a constitutive relationship between certain mental states and introspective access to them, and one can find a short reply to the private language argument. Many of the philosophical arguments, however, are rather brief, and they will hardly convince opposing philosophers. This is not the place to go into any of these arguments. I shall, instead, raise a few general and philosophically minded worries.

First, one objection raised against RT is that it would have to be supplemented with an account of how we attribute feelings and emotions. Likewise, it is argued that TT would have to be supplemented with an account of self-attribution. Goldman suggests that this gives ST a *prima facie* advantage over RT and TT. But Goldman's view is itself a hybrid theory. On many occasions Goldman concedes that ST is also in need of supplementation. In this respect, it is difficult to see here a real advantage for ST.

Second, in his account of self-attribution, Goldman argues that a self-monitoring mechanism is most plausibly sensitive to neural rather than functional, phenomenal or representational properties: it classifies mental state types on the basis of what 'group of cells are activated' (252). This raises questions concerning the possibility of multiple realization. One function of introspection is to classify mental state types. Could the mechanism of introspection not be sensitive to different physical structures in different species or individuals? Could there not be a more abstract description of the mechanism and the properties to which it is sensitive, one that unifies its multiple realizations?

Third, there are questions to be raised about the claim that TT merely supplements ST. As Goldman presents it, the inputs of a standard routine of high-level simulation are pretend-mental states. The inputs of a standard TT attribution, however, are observed properties of the target-subject's behavior and environment in conjunction with knowledge about psychological laws. So, the inputs of a standard simulation are themselves based on the attribution of initial mental states, whereas a standard TT routine can begin with observational and theoretical knowledge only. *Prima facie*, this constitutes a fundamental difference. TT provides a reductive account of mindreading,

whereas ST explains merely how we attribute *further* mental states using simulation. Now, it might still be true that simulation plays an important and irreducible role in mindreading, but TT might play a more fundamental role in mindreading than acknowledged by Goldman.

Nevertheless, this is an important book which assembles an impressive amount of empirical and philosophical argument into a powerful case for a simulation-based hybrid theory of mindreading. It serves as a splendid introduction to the debate, and for philosophers and psychologists working in the area it is essential and highly recommended reading.

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**Cressida J. Heyes**
*Self-Transformations:*
*Foucault, Ethics, and Normalized Bodies.*
Toronto and New York: Oxford University
Press 2007.
Pp. 175.
CDN$110.95/US$99.00
(cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-19-531053-5);
CDN$33.95/US$29.95
(paper ISBN-13: 978-0-19-531054-2).

This is a work in feminist ethics about our relations to our bodies. In five main chapters, Heyes sets out a theoretical framework, and then examines three central cases of bodies that are considered in need of changing: transgender people, overweight people, and people who want cosmetic surgery. She finishes with a proposal of a Foucauldian way for us to care for our bodies.

Heyes takes her theoretical resources primarily from feminist theory and the philosophy of Foucault. She places herself in her text, not just setting out her own views, but also giving some details of her own life and her own experiences in joining Weight Watchers, as well as discussing some of the problems she faces theorizing about other people of whose experience she has limited understanding. Thus it may be reasonable for me as reviewer to disclose more in this review than I would do in other cases, especially since my review will make some criticisms of the book. I am sympathetic to much of the feminist project but I don't ally myself strongly with the theoretical standpoint of Foucault. Furthermore, I'm a male who has no direct experi-

ence of being transgender, being overweight or having or wanting cosmetic surgery.

The writing in this book does not rely excessively on jargon, and its style is relatively straightforward. Chapters are divided into titled sections and Heyes summarizes her main points at the end of each chapter. She surveys a great deal of literature in the process of discussing each subject, and gives a sympathetic summary of each view relevant to the discussion, even when she disagrees with it. Furthermore, Heyes' approach brings a set of theoretical approaches to issues such as weight loss and cosmetic surgery that are more sophisticated than in most other discussions in much feminist theory and certainly more than in standard medical ethics. For that, she deserves a great deal of credit. On top of this, she advances existing debates in constructive ways. So there's much to admire about this work.

One of the most important themes running through the book is the need to go beyond the dichotomy of either seeing people who engage in bodily changes such as sex change operations, dieting, or cosmetic surgery as either simply acting autonomously and therefore beyond criticism, or else acting out of false consciousness and therefore oppressed by gender stereotypes. Heyes acknowledges the importance of prior feminist critiques of idealized women's bodies, and the problems with the pressures experienced by women to be like those ideals. However, she also wants to acknowledge the importance of the care of the self, and the way that such focus on one's own body can contribute to such self-care. In this, she draws especially on the last work of Foucault in the final two volumes of *The History of Sexuality* and some interviews.

In the chapter on Weight Watchers, probably the most accessible in the book, Heyes discusses in some detail the work of Susan Bordo and Sandra Bartky on the construction of femininity and the ways that focus on conforming to norms of beauty can oppress women. Heyes acknowledges their analyses of disciplinary practices relating to dieting, but she counterbalances these with a discussion of 'the active, creative sense of self-development, mastery, expertise, and skill that dieting can offer' (78). In her chapter on cosmetic surgery, she analyzes the issue through a discussion of the TV show *Extreme Makeover*. Again, she acknowledges the insight of influential feminist discussions of the representation of work on the body, in this case by Susan Bordo and Kathy Davis. Heyes finds no positive element of cosmetic surgery to counterbalance its problematic nature, but she does argue that current feminist critiques are not sufficient as forms of resistance or as solutions for women considering changing their bodies using medical technology.

The most provocative chapter in the book is the final main one where Heyes explores the possibility of caring for the self in a socially conscious, non-narcissistic way that would not contribute to oppressive practices. She defends Foucault from critics who accuse him of betraying his former political and ethical commitments in his final work, and she finds his discussion inspiring but elusive. She turns to the recent work of Richard Shusterman on somaesthetics for a more fully elaborated idea of what such caring for the self might look like, but still she does not find sufficiently concrete discussion.

She finishes the chapter by considering three cases that might be considered as forms of caring for the self that might be ethically and politically admirable: bodily modification, British shipyard workers who practiced ballet, and yoga. She describes and evaluates each of these somewhat briefly, and she indicates that this topic is where her future work will be.

The theoretical position set out by Heyes is promising in its overall form, but her argument lacks enough detail to be convincing. In her short book, she covers philosophical methodology, sociology, cultural studies, feminist theory, medical ethics, and ethical theory. Her first main chapter uses Wittgenstein and Foucault to set out a way of thinking about the body in contemporary society, but really Heyes does no more than gesture at a theoretical position rather than develop a sustained argument.

While the earlier theoretical sections give some indication of how one might ground her approach, they don't help much in explaining her later suggestions. Heyes is stronger in her discussion of mutual relevance of theory and personal experience or popular culture. Her positive suggestions about how we might understand an ethical approach to the care of the self are tentative and vague. I wish she had been bolder in her claims and had spent more time developing the ideas hinted at in her final chapter, especially those concerning yoga. Just when this book starts to get interesting, it finishes, and the reader is left wondering whether Heyes' project for conceptualizing a progressive way to care for the self is indeed viable.

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**Russell T. Hurlburt** and **Eric Schwitzgebel**
*Describing Inner Experience?*
*Proponent Meets Skeptic.*
Cambridge, MA: MIT Press 2007.
Pp. 326.
US$34.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-262-08366-9).

In this book an experimental psychologist (Hurlburt) and a philosopher (Schwitzgebel) with somewhat opposed perspectives collaborate in an attempt to determine to what extent the contents of experience can be accurately described through introspective first-person reports. Although skeptical about introspection in general, Hurlburt optimistically presents and defends the use of his Descriptive Experience Sampling (DES) method to obtain an accurate understanding of a subject's conscious experiences. Schwitzgebel, on

the other hand, persists with a largely skeptical perspective on introspection throughout the book, expressing considerable doubt that DES is a significant improvement in the study of consciousness. Although neither Hurlburt nor Schwitzgebel strays too far from the positions they have defended elsewhere, the juxtaposition of their views in this book successfully produces a unique and interesting exploration of introspection and its key role in the investigation of consciousness. The material is presented in a manner that will be accessible and informative to readers lacking a background in the issues at hand, but the book also operates at a level of depth and specificity of interest to those who are already steeped in the literature on introspection, consciousness, and the epistemology of first-person reports.

The format of the book is itself quite unique and deserves some attention here. Its core consists of a series of interviews that loosely follow Hurlburt's DES method, with a subject named Melanie, coupled with the participation of Schwitzgebel as a skeptical outsider. In the DES method, the subject carries around a beeper that randomly prompts her to write down a description of whatever experience she was having in the last undisrupted moment directly prior to the beep. Within twenty-four hours after a series of six to eight such samples has been taken, the subject is interviewed with the goal of reconstructing her reported experiences as carefully and accurately as possible. The book revolves around six such interviews with Melanie. However, unlike normal DES interview sessions, these interviews contain significant amounts of critical and theoretical discussion between Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel about the nature and trustworthiness of Melanie's reports, as well as some meta-analysis of the interview questions that prompted the reports. A number of interesting topics are covered along the way, both within the interview discussions themselves and in supplementary text boxes dispersed throughout containing informative commentary from both Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel. Topics covered include inner speech, thoughts, emotions, bodily experiences, visual and auditory imagery, the presence and/or lack of self-awareness accompanying experience, the richness of experience, similarities and differences in experience across human subjects, the influence of presuppositions and metaphorical conceptualizations, and, most centrally, the trustworthiness of introspective reports, ranging from reports of particular details to broad generalizations about experience. In addition to the interviews and commentaries, which comprise roughly half of the book, there are substantial opening and closing essays by Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel, in which they explain and argumentatively defend their positions and further reflect upon the issues that emerged in the interviews. The result is a thorough dual-perspective analysis of introspective descriptions of experience, uniquely rooted in the concrete reports of a particular individual.

A key focal point throughout this book is a fundamental disagreement about the trustworthiness of introspective reports, particularly those generated by DES. Hurlburt's position is that Melanie generates increasingly accurate reports as she becomes accustomed to the process and his careful 'open-beginninged' questioning. He concludes confidently that the interviews

provided significant insight into Melanie's particular way of experiencing the world. This includes, among other things, the purported discovery of an unusual tendency towards active self-monitoring of her ongoing experience. In contrast, Schwitzgebel defends a perspective he labels 'Descartes Inverted', skeptically arguing that introspective reports face a potentially insurmountable propensity towards error not found in our understanding of the external world. Although he does grant tentative (but still untrusting) acceptance of some of Melanie's basic claims about her experience, Schwitzgebel concludes that DES does little to overcome his skepticism, largely due to a lack of external corroboration to validate its findings. For instance, in regard to the tendency towards self-monitoring described above, Schwitzgebel expresses doubt that Melanie is unusual in this regard and suggests that this conception could be an artifact of the interview process itself. Without any external measures to back up the claim, there is little reason to trust that it is a genuine feature of Melanie's experience. The implication of this skepticism is that the study of consciousness is left between a rock and a hard place: it has no choice but to rely upon introspective reports, but these reports offer little to no epistemic security as things currently stand.

This book leaves us with no final agreement on the epistemic status of introspection, but this is a quite appropriate conclusion considering the fundamental lack of consensus on the topic among both philosophers and psychologists. In fact, we might wonder whether we should be seeking a unified consensus in the first place. What is introspection, after all? Is it a single sort of cognitive process that can be given a one-dimensional epistemic characterization, or is it a heterogeneous collection of different processes with an irreducible plurality of epistemic traits? Unfortunately, neither Hurlburt nor Schwitzgebel directly confronts this issue. Of course, to be fair, the primary focus of the book is the epistemology, not the metaphysics, of introspection. But these two domains are arguably so intertwined that the former cannot be addressed without at least some attention to the latter. For instance, in the course of reading this book I found myself wondering what processes were at work in generating Melanie's reports. Was she drawing upon the same general cognitive resources throughout, or were different resources involved in different reports (or even within the same report)? Answers to such questions are not readily forthcoming, and are perhaps even inaccessible from a first-person level of description, but an adequate understanding of the epistemology of introspection arguably depends upon them. Despite their inattention to these concerns, however, Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel's book is a worthwhile addition to the literature on introspection and offers much of value to think about. It admirably addresses the topic of introspection at a rare level of concrete specificity, and it charts some initial steps through genuinely interdisciplinary debate towards a nuanced understanding of introspection and its crucial but currently tenuous role in the study of the mind.

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**Victoria Kahn, Neil Saccamano,** and
**Daniela Coli, eds.**
*Politics and the Passions, 1500-1850.*
Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 2006.
Pp. 320.
US$70.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-691-11861-1);
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During political elections, many questions arise concerning the role of pas-
sions in politics. When a politician, e.g., Hillary Clinton, cries in public, what
does this mean? What does it mean for people who are not politicians to
feel involved in their government? Should these same people love or fear the
leader of their country? Without constructing a theory of passions *per se*, as
David Hume does in his *Treatise of Human Nature,* this collection presents
'case studies' of particular passions such as pity, fear, love, desire, etc., and
in doing so, one can today see how the history of great political philosophy
applies to these kinds of timeless questions. For example, Bacon, Descartes
and Rousseau all say something about pity in their own contexts. But is it
pity that we feel toward Hillary, and can an historical discussion of pity, or
any of these different perspectives on pity, map onto the contemporary politi-
cal context? While many philosophers or political theorists will be frustrated
by the lack of coherent theoretical framework, this review provides one such
thread for reading the book as a whole: one can see an historical development
of consciousness concerning the passions and, as a result, their relation to the
sphere of politics.

The first three articles attempt to bring out *implicit* themes on the rela-
tionship between politics and passion embedded in the sixteenth century. For
John McCormick's Machiavelli, the appetite for power is the passion that
must be curbed, and the *Discourses on Livy* is a work directed to 'the control
of elites in a popular government' (9). McCormick disagrees with a 'Repub-
lican' Machiavelli, in that both the people and the *grandi* (great) have 'ir-
reconcilable appetites', the former a desire not to be oppressed, the latter a
desire to oppress. Which passion is greater? More importantly, McCormick
asks, whose passion greater inhibits liberty? Unlike McCormick's reading of
Machiavelli, in which Machiavelli never speaks of 'passions' but only desire,
Timothy Hampton's contribution shows why, instead of repressing, harness-
ing or counterbalancing the passions, Montaigne's solution is to avoid them
altogether. As Hampton writes, 'for Montaigne the crisis of French politics is
brought on by the injection of private interest, powered by passion, into the
public sphere. It's not only that the passions are political, but that the politi-
cal, during the French religious wars, is the passionate' (33). Over against
a neo-Stoic such as Justus Lipsius, Montaigne defends the home as the safe
locus for 'a self that is at ease with itself' (35), recalling the Epicurean maxim
*lathe biosas.* Thus, John Guillory, writing on Francis Bacon, takes an angle
where bachelorhood and friendship, *philia* or *amicitia* become central if not
necessary, over the married life, for the natural philosopher. Moreover, in his

*New Atlantis*, Bacon appears to imagine the natural philosopher as always displaying the passion of pity, upholding friendships, bestowing 'largesse' and living in 'sumptuary splendor' (73). Still, none of these first three papers is really about the passions *per se*.

If passion is only an implicit theme in the 1500's, Daniela Coli argues that, by the time of Hobbes (i.e., the seventeenth century), motion, imagination and the passions are at the basis of science and politics and thus *explicit*; even reason itself is born of the passion of curiosity. Due to the very nature of human beings, 'a state's order is fragile unless the citizens feel themselves artificers and in charge of the sovereignty created' (87). The goal of the citizen is thus to obey the sovereign, since the strongest passion is the fear of death. Victoria Kahn shows a direct connection between politics and passion in Descartes. 'Whereas Grotius and Hobbes sought to apply scientific method to the realm of politics, Descartes adapted baroque politics to his new mechanistic science of the body, and in doing so, transformed them both' (95). Over against a purely neo-Stoic political reading of Descartes, Kahn defends a baroque politics of force in which the subject 'alternates between an ideal of generosity or wonder at our capacity to act according to free will, and a mechanistic manipulation of the passions' (109). Judith Butler reads Spinoza's *conatus*, the drive to persevere or endeavour in one's desire, in connection with Freud and Levinas' conceptions of self preservation. At the basis of her view is the fact that '(t)he pursuit of one's own being or, indeed, of life, takes one beyond the particularity of one's own life to the complex relation between life and the expression of power' (123); that is, one desires not only oneself but also all others at one and the same time. This she calls Spinoza's 'ethics under pressure', an ethics in which 'political solidarity' (130) moves beyond pure desire for self-preservation, on the one hand, and pure territoriality or nationalism, on the other.

This tracing of the historical growth of consciousness of the role of passion in politics continues in Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse's article, which concerns Locke and Hutcheson. Since Locke simultaneously worked on the second *Treatise* and the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, '(e)ach theory consequently presupposed and implied the other' (133). What Locke did not sufficiently articulate or argue, however, was how 'the affective faculties . . . ensure that each individual desires what is best for the human community, even when that desire conflicts with some rash or selfish desire' (147). By turning benevolence into the 'primary and only natural human desire' (148), Hutcheson tried to make up for Locke's omission.

Patrick Coleman catalogues Rousseau's *oeuvre*, in which the *force* of emotion is absent, although there is an attempt to suppress gratitude by replacing it with zeal. Here is the first extended discussion of the notion of vulnerability, yet Rousseau is strangely apathetic to a need for dependence on others. 'The description of the compassionate man, like Rousseau's description of the zealous citizen, models a mediated form of solidarity. The subject . . . is not invulnerable . . . He is vulnerable to others' vulnerability, but not in such a way as to create a relationship of dependence' (156). Rousseau's sub-

ject thus cannot depend upon God, the state, a family member or friend. For the 18th century, Hume may appear to be the climax of politics and passion, since he had such a high regard for the importance of both. Neil Saccamano's article plays on the tension in Hume between ridding oneself of prejudice and yet feeling sympathy for another. Taste is thus at the basis of his philosophy of human nature: 'At stake in taste and sentiment for Hume is the possibility of human community, "a party of humankind," that in principle includes all strangers and cuts across social and national divisions' (177). Nevertheless, the notion of 'humanity', which Hume uses, is a universality of everyone and no one, since Hume requires the citizen or the man of taste to rid himself of all prejudice.

As noted, if the sixteenth century can be described as providing implicit treatments of passions in relation to politics, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries display increasingly explicit discussion and treatment of passions. The last three articles of this book argue that the passions *in abstracto* are *ambivalent* with regard to the political. While the passions cannot be ignored, as seen in Riccardo Caporali's analysis of Vico's notion of 'tenderness' (*tenerezza*), e.g., the tenderness parents should have for their children, a true theory of politics must hold that any particular emotional attachment must be overcome. Howard Caygill's discussion of Kant is key in this regard, insofar as '(t)he separation of freedom from nature leaves little room for the passions' (224). The last article of this collection, by Frances Ferguson, is more about Stanley Fish than it is about Bentham and Mill, and thus it leaves the historical perspective behind.

If one is looking for a synoptic overview of how passion relates to politics in the period from Machiavelli to Mill, look no farther. As an historical analysis of themes concerning what might be called political anthropology, Kahn *et al.* have gathered together some excellent articles in this collection, which should thus be read by anyone interested in the relationship of passion and politics. For a unified theory of politics or theory of passions with regards to contemporary political issues, however, one is left desiring more. Many passions are not discussed, and the underlying thread is only briefly described by the editors. For a complementary book in this regard, see *The Secret History of Emotion* (Chicago 2006). The historical assessment provided here of the progression of the relation of politics and passions, in which passions become explicit through history, might have been different had other key figures been included, for instance, Luther, Milton, Burke or Herder. Armstrong and Tennenhouse's description of Hutcheson could be seen as a danger in this book: the 'reduction of "the *Passions*" to the adjective "*passionate*" encapsulates the argument' (146). There is thus an ambivalence with regard to how passions themselves operate (i.e., are they cognitive states or irrational feelings?) and how they are differentiated from each other—especially in different societies and epochs. Hillary's tears, then, are still open to interpretation.

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**Patrick Keeney**
*Liberalism, Communitarianism and Education;*
*Reclaiming Liberal Education.*
Burlington, VT: Ashgate 2007. Pp. 168.
US$99.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-7546-5397-4).

This book presents itself as both an exercise in a form of political philosophy and an exercise in philosophy of education. Despite the academic affiliation of its author (who teaches philosophy of education at Simon Fraser University), and despite his views about the connectedness of the two fields, it is somewhat more of the former than the latter. In fact education is extensively addressed only in the final chapter.

After some scene-setting, Keeney offers an account of philosophical liberalisms and focuses in particular on what he calls 'deontological liberalism', best exemplified in his view by the work of John Rawls, particularly his *A Theory of Justice*. Unlike liberals in the utilitarian tradition, who ground their political theory in a theory of (private) good, an understanding of right action by reference to the maximization of these goods across a society and a set of empirical claims about the social arrangements that will (usually) best serve that maximization, in developing political theory deontological liberals take a theory of right as primary. They offer a liberal social organization as the sort that best serves right action, precisely because it accords full respect to the condition of all members of the society as independent agents. It does so by establishing a system of mutual regard for the rights associated with full exercise of that agency. While some deontological liberals (viz., Kant, 48) seek a metaphysical justification for their moral and political theories in the view that moral agents must possess a will capable of autonomous action, in his central work Rawls seeks a contractarian foundation for the liberal account of justice. Equal liberty of action and equal opportunity to achieve those positions of social privilege that can be justified, are simply aspects of the policy it would be reasonable for rationally self-interested agents to adopt as a condition of social cooperation, given ignorance about how well particular individuals would fare as a result of that cooperation.

Keeney regards this kind of liberalism as guilty of a misrepresentation of the self as 'disembodied, unencumbered, antecedent to society and standing in a shadowy and detached way towards its end' (97). He maintains that our aims and interests are so constituted by our social involvement that it is a misleading abstraction to evaluate our social involvement by the standards that apply to contracts made within a social context by individuals with already constituted aims and interests. The non-instrumental goods we identify derive from our social environment and our role in it. Not only are these goods not private in origin, they are widely shared and often not private in content. Keeney considers himself a communitarian, and a large part of the book is devoted to exposition of two important communitarian theories, those of Alasdair MacIntyre (Chapter 7) and Charles Taylor (Chapter 8). These are followed by a final chapter in which it is claimed that our society's valued

practice of 'liberal education' furnishes a reason to prefer a communitarian approach to normative social theory.

Drawing on *After Virtue*, Keeney sees MacIntyre as attempting a revision of Aristotle in order to build an account of the good that is less dependent on controversial assumptions about human nature, but that is sufficient to show both that human activity can have a point and that human excellence and praiseworthy human action can be understood as serving fundamental human goods. He does this relying on the notion of a *practice*, a 'coherent and complex form of social activity' (105, quoting *After Virtue*) which generates internal goods realizable by those who participate in the activity, making at least some of their values those established by the activity. These practices enable the participant to act on the basis of intentions that can help provide both a narrative unity for her/his life and a point for the effort. Keeney finds a communitarian alternative to the liberal understanding of the *self* in Charles Taylor's account of self identity as 'caught up in self-interpretation' (120). This activity depends on encounters with a social environment interpreted in terms of socially constituted meanings, evaluated against a scheme of respect for persons, and against ideas of the good life based on identification of supreme or dominating goods, called 'hypergoods' (129), themselves established by social encounter.

Keeney regards what he understands as liberal education to be a practice in MacIntyre's sense. It has for its aim the initiation of others into further practices of a particular potency when it comes to community formation. Drawing on the work of R. S. Peters and Robin Barrow in the philosophy of education, he sees education as aimed at the free development of mind by way of a transfer of 'worthwhile' knowledge, in a manner that transforms the perspective of the individual subject to it while enlisting the subject as a willing, witting cooperator in it. As is language acquisition, it is an initiation of a new participant into the development of a public set of understandings and values (139-42). When regard for this initiation is widespread in a community, that community has an important shared practice, constitutive of the identity of its own members.

I offer one Rawlsian response to this. Grant the social constitution of the self, and its relevance to questions of just cooperation, but add the observation that these constitutive processes are multiple, varied along lines of class, ethnicity, religion, region, occupation, gender, sexual orientation and the like. Pluralistic societies demand cooperation across such lines, among people who can differ widely in understandings and values. A just standard for shared endeavor in this case will have to be based on Rawlsian mutual respect, expressed in widely understood signs. The main educational endeavor such a community could be asked to share would be an initiation in the practice of this respect and in the use of the associated symbols. That, I suggest, would be the core of a pluralistic trans-communitarian liberal education.

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**Henrik Lagerlund**
*Representation and Objects of Thought
in Medieval Philosophy.*
Burlington, VT: Ashgate 2007.
Pp. 166.
US$99.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-7546-5126-0).

As editor Lagerlund states in the first, introductory chapter of this book, we witness here an attempt to 'bring out the complexity and sophistication of the medieval and early modern discussions of [mental representation] by discussing both the metaphysical and the epistemological problems related to the notion of representation in the soul or mind' (4). It is normally assumed that the study of the mind started with Descartes, and that Descartes endorsed representational realism, the view that we are directly acquainted with internal, mental items, which represent an external, otherwise elusive reality. In recent years, both assumptions have been criticized, and this book intends to contribute to this debate. It is now clear that Descartes built on a conceptual framework that had been developed in medieval discussions about Aristotle's *De anima* and its Arabic commentaries. Furthermore, medieval debates show a complexity that is now forgotten: for them, mental representations could have either an epistemological or a metaphysical role. Contemporary philosophers (Kenny, Stroud, Rorty) overlook the latter, and thus take for granted that a mental representationalist should necessarily be an indirect realist. In fact, though, a *metaphysical* mental representationalist could grant representations a purely metaphysical role (i.e., to be means rather than objects of representation), and endorse direct realism (like Aquinas) or even idealism. Since Descartes was aware of this complexity, his representational realism should be reconsidered.

The second chapter, 'The Terminological and Conceptual Roots of Representation in the Soul in Late Ancient and Medieval Philosophy', is by Lagerlund. The philosophical, strict sense of 'representation' was first introduced in Latin translations of Avicenna. Avicenna used the words that were translated with 'representation' in relation to the internal senses, but the scope of the term was progressively extended to higher cognitive faculties. Only with Peter of Ailly did it acquire the current meaning: 'a mental particular with a causal role, standing for something else' (29). It is not clear, though, why Lagerlund takes Aquinas's intelligible species to be internal, rather than conceptual or mental representations (24). Furthermore, in his conclusion, he claims that the translation of Avicenna's works not only *introduced* the term in the Latin philosophical jargon, but also *created* the concept of representation, which could not be found as such in Avicenna himself, since the word 'representation' was used to translate related, but different Arabic terms. This claim requires further support: Lagerlund lists Arabic terms translated with '*representatio*', but does not say anything about the semantic differences among them. He needs to convince the reader that they do not form a semantic network that is captured, rather than created, by '*representatio*'.

The third chapter, by Robert Pasnau, is entitled 'Abstract Truth in Aquinas'. Pasnau thinks that Aquinas' claim that the objects of intellection (i.e., the intelligible species) exist only in the intellect is problematic (39). He discusses several related problems (Aquinas's stands on abstraction, on the veracity of intellection, on sentential truth). Pasnau interprets Aquinas as often getting in trouble, but he almost always rescues him. He seems to think that in two cases this is impossible: it would not be clear why the intellect should abstract from sensible species some features rather than others, and how *several* forms (genus, species, individualizing features) could be abstracted from one individual, which — according to Aquinas — has *one* substantial form *only*. These are interesting problems indeed, and it is worth mentioning here how the discussion of each could proceed. Concerning the former, a solution could be sought in Aquinas's claims about the cogitative power and *experimentum* (cf. James Stromberg 'An Essay on "Experimentum" ' [I and II], *Laval théologique et philosophique* 23 [1967], 76-115, and 24 [1968], 99-138). The second problem could be tackled by looking at Aquinas's claims about the *potential* existence of the intelligible species in individual substances, and at his claims about different senses of 'existence', in connection with 'form' as one of the senses of 'substance' (cf. his commentary on *Metaphysics*). This would lead to an account of the identity of forms, which might be quite different from that of individual things, and which could make room for the possibility that *one and the very form* might have different modes of existence (i.e.,, natural and intentional, both sensible and intellectual).

In the fourth chapter ('Representation in Scholastic Epistemology') Martin Tweedale suggests that from Aristotle to Scholasticism repeated attempts were made to combine the claim that in cognition we are acquainted with external objects, with the claim that external objects are somehow contained in the cognizer. William of Alnwick, according to Tweedale, was the first to offer a satisfying solution, on the grounds of a conjunction between the Scotist distinction between *esse obiectivum* and *subiectivum*, and his distinction between the representer and the content. 'Prior theories of representation suffer from the problems that they have largely because of a failure to make this distinction between representer and content' (78). This interesting claim would deserve further consideration, as the author recognizes. Did earlier theories really fail to distinguish content and representation? How and why did this failure jeopardize their conclusions?

The fifth chapter, 'Rethinking Representation in the Middle Ages: A Vademecum to Medieval Theories of Mental Representation', is by Peter King. This enlightening piece tracks the destiny of four Aristotelian tenets: mental representations i) have the forms of represented objects, ii) are their likenesses, iii) are caused by them, and iv) signify them. Aquinas brought to its final consequences the thought that a representation must have the form of the object, through his claim that the form of the object exists intentionally in cognizers. But 'what is it for a form to be present only 'intentionally'? Aquinas never says, or, to the extent he does, his account is opaque

to his disciples and detractors, then and now' (85). Pictorial theories (e.g., Scotus's) also failed, and only Ockham found a solution: he gave up mental representation and explained cognition as an act of the mind. King claims that this resembles current functionalism, and thus opens a dialogue between medieval theories of cognition and current philosophy of mind, in a direction which contradicts previous, similar attempts. For example, John Haldane had proposed that Aquinas's notion of formal identity between cognizer and object would overcome the problems that Hilary Putnam found in functionalism, and would call for an interpretation of Aquinas according to which mental representations are not mental items, but acts of the mind, i.e., 'representations' in the theatrical sense (cf. J. Haldane, 'A Return to Form in the Philosophy of Mind', *Ratio* 11, 253-277). To Haldane (a 'disciple' of Aquinas?), the Thomistic notion of intentionality does not seem 'opaque', and he makes philosophical use of it 'now'. It would be interesting to know what King thinks of this interpretation of Aquinas and the subsequently proposed solution to the problems of mental representation.

'William Ockham and Mental Language' is the sixth chapter, by Mikko Yrjönsuuri. When Ockham discussed mental language, he was not looking for a hidden logical structure of language, but theorizing about meaning. For Ockham, the meaning of written and spoken languages, which are conventional, depends on a naturally intentional mental language. Yrjönsuuri reads Ockham's theory of connotative terms in the light of his account of syncategorematic language and hence understands his mental language as a universal grammar (akin to Chomsky's), which (unlike Chomsky's) is acquired (non-innate) and represents a mind-independently structured word. The author notes that this calls for a revision of traditional interpretations of Ockham.

In 'Matter of Thought', the seventh chapter, Calvin Normore shows that the contemporary distinction between wide and narrow content has a long history: it originated in the debates about Aristotle's argument for the immateriality of the intellect. This was grounded on the assumption that the intellect — in order to be able to 'become all things' — cannot have any determinate nature. Normore shows that one of the ways of understanding the distinction between natural and intentional existence of forms led, in Descartes' times, to the distinction between objective and subjective existence, which is the antecedent of the wide-narrow content distinction.

The eighth and final chapter, by Deborah Brown, is titled 'Objective Being in Descartes: That Which We Know or That By Which We Know'. Against customary interpretations, Brown contends that Descartes was not a representational realist. Her persuasive argument focuses on the meaning of 'objective existence', on the relation between objective and formal existence, and on the significance of material error. Some common objections are addressed through the distinction between representationalism as a theory of the mind and as a theory of knowledge. Descartes would be a representationalist in the former sense only, since he thought that representations might explain how our minds work and why their procedures are justified, but claimed no role for them in the justificatory processes of cognition.

The book offers a view of cutting-edge historiography about mental representation in the Middle Ages and beyond, and it is a valuable introduction to theoretical issues. But it also raises points and problems which both historians and philosophers working on this subject cannot overlook.

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**Marion Ledwig**
*Common Sense:*
*Its History, Method, and Applicability.*
New York: Peter Lang 2007.
Pp. 157.
US$62.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-8204-8884-4).

There is no common sense about common sense. Ledwig's book is a new attempt to try to clarify this somewhat elusive notion. Her introduction reviews some recent attempts to do the same and maintains that they have not been very successful overall, even if a number of them have made some positive contributions to the project.

Ledwig's first chapter focuses upon Thomas Reid's account of common sense, which is examined both historically, in terms of the influences affecting the development of Reid's common sense doctrine, and conceptually, as an attempt to explicate the meaning of Reid's doctrine. However, Ledwig pays disconcertingly little attention to Reid's texts. Instead, she reports upon what commentators said about Reid and shows that they have often disagreed. Unfortunately, the book here comes far too close to being a list of opinions concerning Reid's account of common sense. A more direct analysis of Reid's own views would certainly have been more interesting.

At many points in Ledwig's discussion one has the strange experience of being referred in footnotes to expositors and critics without any quotation of their principal comments about Reid. The strangeness becomes even deeper when Ledwig turns to 'Reid's connection with Austin and Searle'. She explains first why there is no reason to think that Austin or Searle have been influenced by Reid (29); and, indeed, Searle himself explained recently (in the *Times Literary Supplement*, no. 5470, February 1, 2008) that his aim in philosophy is not to defend common sense, but simply to get as close at the truth as he can. The fact that we can find 'similar developments' in two or three philosophers is not a sound reason for grouping them within the same tradition. Everything resembles everything, in one way or another. It is sometimes interesting to show that two philosophers who seem to say very

different things in fact say the same. It is usually much less interesting to show that two philosophers who say the same thing superficially do not, in the end, agree. The principal upshot of Ledwig's chapter is that the notion of common sense is highly confused. The method of the book — the listing of all the opinions of recent commentators along with some older ones — is of little help in untangling that confusion. The book's first chapters might be useful to those who are interested in a summary of what has been said about Reid's account of common sense, but they do very little in the way of philosophical work.

Chapters 3 and 4 deal with common sense in Hume and Kant. The method applied is similar to that described for earlier chapters: there are many references to commentators and few citations to Hume and Kant, e.g., where they are found to use the notion of 'common understanding'. Chapter 4 considers the question whether 'folk psychology' is to be considered common sense, with a sort of review of what as been said on that topic. Chapter 5 examines the relation between proverbs and common sense. Ledwig arrives at the conclusion that all proverbs express common sense, where 'common sense' means propositions held in common.

The sixth and last chapter is, to my mind, the most interesting one, because it is not a mere list of opinions, but the analysis of a problem: 'The aim in this chapter is to try to answer the fundamental question of whether game theory can be reduced to decision theory by questioning the common knowledge assumption of game theory' (125). The notion of 'common knowledge' in this context comes from David Lewis. The idea is that players share a common knowledge of rules and of the rationality of players. But some philosophers have contested the importance of this common knowledge: a rational player does not have to believe that her opponents are rational; common knowledge can lead to indeterminacy; common knowledge can lead to runaway phenomena; common knowledge is an inconsistent notion; common knowledge does not help us in predicting another game player's actions. Ledwig concludes that these criticisms pose real problems for common knowledge theory in game theory. But her argumentation is not very clear, and the relation between common knowledge and common sense is (rather disconcertingly) left as an open question.

In her conclusion, Ledwig claims that 'it seems to be a prudent maxim with regard to all the sciences to start with commonsensical assumptions and then to see whether they hold' (141). But the problem is precisely that a great many philosophers think that this is an uncritical, or even a silly, maxim, as opposed to a prudent one. For example, Gaston Bachelard tried to show that the 'scientific mind' does not start from commonsensical assumptions, which, in his view, work first and foremost as epistemological obstructions. Even if you think that Bachelard is wrong, as I do, it is hard to see how Ledwig's book provides us with any weighty arguments against him.

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**Ian MacMullen**
*Faith In Schools? Autonomy, Citizenship,*
*and Religious Education in the Liberal State.*
Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 2007.
Pp. 230.
CDN$35.82 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-692-13091-0).

Whether or to what extent the liberal state ought to fund religious educational alternatives to public schools raises a deep dilemma: what is the correct course of action when facing a conflict between the private interests of families wanting religious education for their children, on the one hand, and the liberal goal of improving our political community through the fostering of autonomous self-reflection, assumed by many to be better achieved by public secular schooling, on the other? This dilemma exposes the need to resolve the nature and depth of the liberal commitments to autonomy and neutrality: does the liberal state need to remain neutral in the debate over the value of individual autonomous reflection about the good life, or is the value of autonomy presupposed in any liberal regime? Resolving these questions requires clarification at the roots of liberalism itself, and MacMullen's book raises and wrestles with these issues in a thoughtful and provocative way, which is sure to raise the level of debate on this important issue.

MacMullen argues that autonomy ought to be seen by liberalism as having instrumental, rather than intrinsic, value: autonomy, on his conception, is the capacity to engage in critical self-reflection about one's values and ideas of the good life, and such a capacity has intrumental value at two levels: critical self-reflection is a reliable method for evaluating and improving upon one's own conception of the good, and in turn this improved conception of the good facilitates the civic goal of reproducing our liberal democratic political system. A conception of autonomy as instrumental to these two goals has the advantage of being a methodological conception, and thus within the fair boundaries of what liberalism rightly can endorse, rather than a substantive conception, and thus outside of the boundaries of the requirements of neutrality that the liberal state must endorse.

If this instrumentalist understanding is correct — and MacMullen does an admirable job of defending it — then it follows that the state ought to endorse, and indeed insist on, public education as the venue for this kind of methodological, instrumental training in autonomy. It would then follow, in turn, that whatever educational system facilitated such autonomy training for its students ought to be funded by the state, and thus the question of public funding for religious schools becomes an empirical, rather than a theoretical, question: if the religious school's curriculum provides adequate training in autonomy, that is a sufficient condition, MacMullen argues, for receiving public funds.

Given this line of reasoning, MacMullen argues that the question of whether the liberal state ought to fund religious education is to some extent asked at the wrong level. Liberal theorists of education have painted religious edu-

cation with too broad a brush, according to MacMullen, since different types of religious schools offer varying degrees of autonomy to their students. The question, then, is not a question of whether, but rather of which, religious education the liberal state ought to fund. At the primary school level, children's future autonomy is fostered not so much by a curriculum which stresses cultural and ethical diversity, but rather by reinforcing students' grasp of their primary culture. Given that, MacMullen argues, religious schools should be broadly funded at the primary school level, since religious schools are as able to foster children's autonomy as public schools are. At the secondary school level, on the other hand, religious schools ought to receive public funds only if their curricula are consistent with fostering autonomy by exposing students to cultural and ethical diversity, which are the appropriate benchmarks for the fostering of autonomy for that age group. Since religious schools are less likely to meet this criterion at the secondary school level, there are fewer of them that ought to receive funding, MacMullen argues, but the ones that do meet this standard ought to be fully funded.

Further, and more controversially, MacMullen contends that there ought to be no privately funded religious schools: wealthy parents should not have the option to 'buy their way' out of the liberal education regime. Thus, schools which fail to foster autonomy in their students ought to cease to exist, rather than simply be permitted by the state, and privately funded. This is because 'we should be committed to distributing the good of religious schooling, and its attendant civic costs, in accordance with the meaning of the good, its significance and value to individuals, families, and the state. It is arbitrary and unjustifiable to say that religious schooling is to be provided always and only when the child's family is willing and able to pay' (50).

These policy directives are direct consequences of MacMullen's findings about the value of autonomy as instrumental, rather than intrinsic, and as such they are not at all out of place in this discussion. However, in making concrete policy recommendations MacMullen exposes himself to a host of objections and further questions: How would we evaluate and enforce these various putative autonomy-enhancing curricula? How do we apportion finite and scarce state resources among schools, even among those which meet the autonomy criteria for funding? Further, the fostering of autonomy, on Mac-Mullen's conception, admits of degrees: it certainly makes sense to think of some curricula as more supportive of critical reflection on the good life than others, though each meets the requisite threshold level, and if this is the case, then we are faced with the question of ought funding to be proportional to the school's level of encouragement of autonomy, with priority of resources to be given to schools higher on the scale than others?

While of course these are questions that MacMullen ought not to be expected to answer in detail here, and that are perhaps answerable only in the messy realm of politics, rather than the relatively cleaner realm of theory, one question that seems fair to ask of MacMullen is whether these kinds of issues raise such a presumptive 'opening the floodgates' type of concern that the value of his line of inquiry ought to be called into question. This is a ques-

tion each reader of this thoughtful and provocative book ought to resolve for herself, and the book and the questions it inspires are both very worthwhile.

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**John McCumber**
*Reshaping Reason: Toward a New Philosophy.*
Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2005.
Pp. xix + 263.
US$24.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-253- 34503-5);
US$19.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-253-21936-7).

John McCumber has long been interested in the link between philosophy and time. In books such as *Poetic Interaction* and *Time in the Ditch*, he argues that there is more to philosophy than the search for eternal truth. It is also philosophy's job to orient us towards the past and the future. *Reshaping Reason*, now reissued in paperback (2007), continues McCumber's project and places it in a larger context. It claims that philosophy is not monolithic, but consists of three distinct activities, all crucially related to the nature of time. It is a bold, original, and important attempt to determine what philosophy is and what it might become.

McCumber begins with some discouraging remarks about the state of the discipline. Philosophy is in 'institutional decline' (4), with shrinking departments and dwindling influence in the wider culture. Worse, much philosophical discussion is mired in debates that are interminable and pointless. Some philosophers respond by fleeing to 'Fantasy Island' (7) — continuing to try to settle these debates in old ways despite evidence that the old ways are not working. Others turn the discipline into a 'Subversive Struggle' (7) and endlessly criticize traditional philosophy without offering an alternative. It is hard not to see these labels as synonyms for 'analytic' and 'continental' philosophy, but McCumber insists they are larger tendencies found in us all. He claims that they stem from the assumption that philosophy's job consists in 'establishing truths by argument alone' (10). The way out of the contemporary impasse is to reject this assumption and articulate different goals for philosophy. But which goals? Our experience of time offers a clue. Time has three modalities, but traditional philosophical thinking is concerned only with the present. It seeks to articulate true propositions. But true propositions 'require the simultaneous availability — the "copresence" — of the assertions themselves and whatever it is that makes them true. Otherwise they

cannot be verified' (xii). McCumber calls the search for true propositions 'inference' (69), and grants that it is an indispensable part of philosophy. But it does not exhaust philosophy. Equally important are types of thinking directed at the past and future. McCumber calls the former *narrative*. Its goal is to help us understand ourselves by tracing the histories of the situations into which we are thrown. He calls the latter *demarcation*, characterizing it as the attempt to respond thoughtfully to the future — an unknown that defines us. The history of philosophy offers examples of each. Hegel's work is a 'giant narrative' (86), while Heidegger's work deals with our 'defining ignorance' (83) of the future. Unlike inference, narrative and demarcation do not have truth as their ultimate aim. But each of these activities needs the others: 'Demarcation without narrative is empty; inference without narrative is blind; narrative without demarcation is reactionary; narrative without inference is fiction' (102).

The most exciting parts of the book discuss what this scheme implies for traditional branches of philosophy. McCumber devotes one chapter to ontology and another to ethics, asking what these fields might look like if philosophy were concerned with all three temporal modalities. Ontology, of which metaphysics is a species, would no longer be seen as an inquiry into the unchanging structure of reality. McCumber associates this inquiry with 'ousia ontology' — that is, 'the view that any being has a form which is or should be responsible for the boundaries, internal order, and outward effects of that thing' (113). By viewing beings as self-contained, self-moving units, ousia ontology removes change from their essences. A thing's form does not change. If we see reason as temporal all the way down, this sort of ontology will look implausible. We will abandon the idea of a single, correct ontology, and instead see ontologies as pragmatic recommendations about how to view beings. Whether we adopt a given ontology will be settled 'practically' (125), 'on a case-by-case basis' (130). This is not a flabby relativism. McCumber astutely points out that 'there are certain properties (an ontology) must exhibit if it is to play into a case of pragmatic evaluation at all' (134). Thus a pressing task for the new philosophy is meta-ontology, an account of the general features ontologies must have to advance our projects in specific circumstances. McCumber sketches some of the vocabulary that a meta-ontology could employ. The crucial point is that evaluating an ontology requires us to take account of all three temporal modalities. To ask whether a given ontology suits us is to ask how it situates us with respect to the past, and which futures it opens up. We can do ontology only 'in a concrete situation, in such a way as both to clarify and carry forward that situation' (160).

This emphasis on concrete situations also appears in McCumber's account of ethics. He understands ethics broadly, as encompassing not just the study of the rightness or wrongness of actions, but all reflection on how it is necessary to live. The breadth of this approach follows from reason's temporal character. Before we can act ethically, 'we must have defined the situation we are in; we must have satisfied ourselves that we know what sort of thing is happening and what sort of thing needs to happen' (164). Defining our situa-

tion is largely a matter of understanding how we have been shaped by society and the natural world. The topic of freedom is therefore central to McCumber's discussion of ethics. Freedom is a problem for traditional ethical theories. Agents apparently must be free to deserve moral praise or blame, but there seems little room for such freedom in nature as we understand it. In McCumber's view, the belief that we need such freedom is a hangover of ousia ontology. Only if we view agents as 'discrete beings having within themselves principles of motion and rest' (171) will we think they must be the sole causes of their actions. If we reject ousia ontology — and we will, if we see reason as temporal all the way down — the influence of nature and society will appear less troubling. McCumber also draws on recent discoveries in cognitive science to give an intriguing account of moral decision-making. According to these discoveries, most decisions are made a split-second before we are aware of making them. This suggests that the purpose of an ethical decision is not to determine an action to take place. Instead, a decision is a 'mobilization of interior resources around a course of action' (182). To mobilize resources around a course of action is to understand how it came about, and how it might serve as a springboard for future possibilities. Ethics requires narrative and demarcation.

A short review cannot do this book justice. Some of its richest parts are its many offhand, aphoristic remarks about the history of philosophy: that Hegel and Heidegger use 'truth' as a placeholder term for their innovations (29), for example, or that Foucault's mysterious 'power' is a descendant of the equally mysterious Kantian will (182). The book's most controversial feature is its discussion of truth. McCumber claims not merely that philosophy pursues goals other than truth. He also claims that there are degrees of truth, and he freely grants that his own claims are merely 'as true as (he) can make them' (49). Whatever one makes of this, it is perfectly in keeping with the book's commitment to a 'temporalized mind . . . whose every single component and function has come to be and will pass away' (xi). But there is a surprising consequence here. One of the problems with contemporary philosophy, it seems, is its fragmentation — the existence of incompatible approaches with no generally accepted way forward. Yet this book also implies that philosophy is fragmented, though in a different way. It claims not that philosophy consists of three distinct activities; it argues that 'all three . . . should be in use at all times' (160), since they 'cannot function apart from one another' (89). This suggests that what justifies a piece of philosophy is not simply whether it is true (or as true as we can make it), but how successful it is at opening up a future and at situating us in relation to the past. But inference, narrative, and demarcation require different attitudes towards truth. When I engage in inference, I see truth as my end. When I engage in narrative or demarcation, I see truth as at best a means to some other end. To engage in all three activities at once — as, it seems, I must — is to adopt different attitudes towards truth simultaneously. It is not clear that these attitudes will always conflict, but it is also not clear that they will never be in tension. Philosophy, on this view, looks like an essentially fragmented activity. This may be unavoidable,

since we are fragmented by time. But it suggests that the reshaping of reason has far-reaching consequences.

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**Elizabeth Millán-Zaibert**
*Friedrich Schlegel and the Emergence of Romantic Philosophy.*
Albany: State University of New York Press 2007.
Pp. 267.
US$80.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-7914-7083-1);
US$25.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-7914-7084-8).

This is an interesting account of one of the most important figures of early German romanticism. Millán-Zaibert presents Schlegel as a serious anti-foundationalist, keen to develop philosophy in more 'poetic' ways, but by no means as averse to reason as has sometimes been alleged.

Millán-Zaibert starts off by relating Schlegel to debates about the character of romanticism. She shares the reaction against Ernst Behler's portrayal of the movement as essentially literary; like Manfred Frank, Andrew Bowie and Frederick Beiser, she wants to emphasize its properly philosophical character. She goes on to agree with Frank and Bowie, as against Beiser, in denying that romantic philosophy should be seen as part of the broader current of German idealism. It all of course depends on what one takes German idealism to be. Millán-Zaibert sees it as exemplified by Hegel — 'the most typical German Idealist' (37) — and as such construes it in essentially rationalist terms. This then makes it easy to distinguish it from romanticism. This approach is questionable, not least because it seems to take Hegel's sense of himself as the culmination of the idealist current at face value, notwithstanding Millán-Zaibert's stated skepticism about the traditional 'Kant-to-Hegel' narrative (e.g., 28, 32, 44 and 51). It is striking that Schelling hardly features in this discussion; had he done so, different conclusions might have been drawn.

Most of the book is devoted to showing how Schlegel's philosophy emerged through a series of encounters with other thinkers. Millán-Zaibert gives thumbnail sketches of Kant, Jacobi, Reinhold, Fichte and Niethammer and considers how Schlegel reacted to their ideas and developed his own in his notebooks, published writings and lectures. This genetic approach is very helpful, but there are a number of problems with it.

First, many of the other thinkers discussed will most likely already be familiar to readers and Millán-Zaibert's treatment of them is somewhat too slight. She tells us enough to illuminate what Schlegel wrote about them (often in a very abbreviated style), but not enough to probe more deeply. This is particularly apparent in relation to Fichte: Schlegel's critique of Fichte is articulated clearly, but the issue of how indebted Schlegel might be to him does not really come sufficiently into view. (This criticism must be qualified by adding that the account of the least familiar figure in the list of thinkers mentioned above, Friedrich Immanuel Niethammer, is very enlightening and will be of interest to English language students of German idealism generally.)

Second, Millán-Zaibert's approach of dealing with Schegel's reaction to each thinker in turn makes for some degree of repetition in the presentation of his thought. We are rather too frequently told that he is a critic of philosophizing from first principles, an anti-foundationalist and so on, and it is only toward the end of the book that these programmatic claims start to be properly elaborated.

Third, tracking Schegel's engagement with the Kant to Niethammer results in a narrative which presents him as a rather solitary protagonist. We get no real sense of his interaction with the romantic circle of which he was a key member, nor any sense of how his critique of Fichte compares with that of his friend Novalis. Given the importance the romantics put on 'symphilosophizing' (Schlegel's own term), this seems odd. Moreover, it means that the 'romantic philosophy' invoked in the title turns out to be just Schlegel's, which is disappointing.

In the last two chapters Millán-Zaibert discusses what she takes to be Schlegel's main philosophical ideas. First of all, she considers the key concept of the *Wechselerweis*. This term, which she chooses not to translate (but suggests could be rendered as reciprocal or alternating confirmation), is 'Schlegel's proposed alternative both to absolute first principles . . . and to appeals to common sense' (134). It designates the basic distinction which philosophy reveals between the principle of consciousness and the idea of the infinite (represented by Fichte and Spinoza respectively), which together constitute the poles of both experience and reality. For Schlegel, accordingly, philosophy finds itself 'in the middle', hovering and shuttling between the two poles. Millán-Zaibert subtly teases out the sense of Schlegel's suggestive metaphilosophical comments, but gives us insufficient information about how he himself developed these in practice, in particular in his various philosophy lectures from the early 1800s. One suspects that his striking programmatic statements did not easily translate into illuminating philosophical discussion. Other important themes considered by Millán-Zaibert are Schlegel's organic conception of objectivity, his coherentist account of understanding, and irony.

A few citations are incorrect: note 65 to Chapter 2 should refer to p. 93 of vol. 12 of the *Kritische Ausgabe* of Schlegel's works, not p. 232; note 67 should refer to p. 95, not p. 237; note 68 should also refer to p. 93. (All these endnotes are on 192).

One final point of criticism: the book is deceptively lengthy. Of the 267 pages, only 175 are taken up by the main text. There are nearly 60 pages of notes, mainly made up of the German originals of passages translated into English in the body of the text, with some appearing more than once. When combined with the repetitiousness noted earlier, this leaves one feeling that a shorter and sharper book is submerged within its pages. However notwithstanding these various quibbles, this book is a useful adjunct to the work of Beiser, Bowie and Frank.

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**William Ian Miller**
*Eye for an Eye.*
New York: Cambridge University Press 2006.
Pp. 279.
US$28.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-521-85680-5);
US$19.99 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-521-70467-0).

In this book, his latest, Miller continues what has been a career-long investigation into issues of shame, honor, and revenge. This work is, for lack of a better description, a genealogical approach to *lex talionis*, the law of retaliation. Focusing primarily on Icelandic folklore but venturing into other traditions and literary venues, Miller explicates the desire for 'evenness' in justice by illustrating the role it has historically played in various social orders.

In the Preface Miller explains that his intent is to offer a theory of justice, or rather an 'antitheory of justice' (ix). The trend, he claims, has been to dismiss revenge as irrelevant or antithetical to justice, and he wishes to re-establish the place of revenge or 'the talion' in discussions of the subject. In a sense he is correct that revenge has been rejected as antithetical to justice insofar as theories of justice are usually egalitarian, that is, not relative to subjective feelings of harm, anger, and so forth; and not based on whim or meant to be about pain for pain's sake. However, to claim that no due has been given to the talion is incorrect, especially in light of the considerable work done on the vindictive emotions in respect of theories of punishment and forgiveness, by such authors as Jeffrie Murphy and Jean Hampton. And if the reader is anticipating a dialogue between these various philosophical traditions and authors, she will be disappointed. But even though Miller's grasp of the philosophical material is limited, and his dialogue with philoso-

phers and philosophical traditions is superficial (when present), the book has value in the depth and breadth of its genealogical approach.

Miller's work is both an etymological investigation into the idioms of exchange surrounding justice, e.g., concepts such as evenness, paying back, paying for, as well as an account of how these idioms have functioned historically. Thus, the reader is given material by which to understand how the talion functioned to reproduce and maintain societies rooted in the normative ideal of honor, and why the idiom of exchange was the best means by which to express wrongs and calculate restitution. Thus one is shown how determinations of worth and desert were not arbitrary but based on ideas of respect, dignity, or *wergeld* (the worth of persons). Such an account is also instructive concerning why our use of exchange idioms seems arbitrary due to our rejection of a normative social value such as honor or any analog which would provide justification for claims to evenness. Miller leads the reader to the insight that modern theories of retribution fail because they discard the fundamental base of such a theory, i.e., an objective, socially recognizable and necessary norm such as honor, on which one can base claims of respect and shame, even if he himself does not so clearly bring out the implications of his notions. In several places Miller does point out how we value life by its duration or amount of pleasure, but not by its dignity, not by its honor. 'We are so afraid of death and pain that we will bankrupt our grandchildren's generation to add more useless years at the butt-end of our days . . . . Cowardice, lust, luxury, slothful ease. There is no honor in them at all' (57). He concludes, '(W)e are not as smart now as we were when people worried more about their honor than about their pleasure' (202).

When Miller focuses on the talion, he pursues major themes surrounding its function, themes such as evenness, the oddman, *wergeld*, as well as the problem of incommensurable goods. His discussion is thus thorough in tracing out the importance of the concept as well as its role in moral and legal discourses. Miller even links these concepts to current notions of tort, to show that these traditional notions are not so far off of our current usage.

Fundamentally, the idea of retaliation is about giving people what they are due, the most famous formulation of which is the classic eye for an eye. The underlying idea is evenness. Through transgression the scales are put out of balance. But what needs to be made even is not the amount of pain felt or some idea of cosmic justice, but rather affirmation of a person's value with respect to a cultural measure of value, such as *wergeld*, or the worth of a person determined by a value such as honor. Retaliation affirms the social order and promotes respect for people and positions; it is not a trivial way of causing pain, but an affirmation of one's worth. Such an idea is very much in line with current debate surrounding the issue of recognition.

Underlying all of this is the idea that the value of a person and her parts, whether it is *wergeld*, the worth of a whole person which changes depending on social position, or of the parts depending on their usefulness, is determinable. Miller provides historical examples of tables, such as King Æthelberht's laws and valuations, that present worth in quantitative terms for offenses

ranging from the grabbing of hair to piercing a nose to striking off a little finger. It is this kind of piecemeal valuation that is seen by many as either arbitrary or demeaning or both, in the sense that it reduces a person to a sum of goods and calculates their human value in terms of money: it commodifies people. Miller quickly presents this objection as that of the incommensurability of values and mentions such proponents as Martha Nussbaum and Joseph Raz, although unfortunately — and all too characteristically of Miller's style — this is where the engagement ends: a mention, a nod, but no dialogue. The idea of incommensurable goods according to Miller is simply misguided, although he fails to deal in depth with these issues.

As a whole the book is a valuable exploration into the concept of retaliation, fungible moral goods, and the idea of evenness or an eye for an eye; although his claims to offer an 'antitheory' of justice fall short, given that he rarely engages with theories of justice at all. Yet anyone interested in issues of honor, revenge, or desert would be well served giving this book her time and attention.

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In this book Pates offers a rigorous argument against institutionalized punishment, especially that form of punishment most favored in the West, prison incarceration. One by one, Pates offers a comprehensive explication of each of the traditional theories of punishment, from Jeremy Bentham's consequentialism (that sees the justification for state punishments in their pragmatic effects on the citizen population, reduction of crime rate, moral reform and education of social offenders, and deterrence of law-abiding citizens) to retributivist theories of punishment (that see the ends of punishment in the re-equalization of social benefits and burdens through the dole of just desert to offenders and the restoration of peace in the community by granting closure to the offended).

In both theoretical paradigms, consequences are all that matter. However, if consequences are all that matter, then, Pates argues, we ought to be highly

disturbed to learn that there exists overwhelming evidence to demonstrate that, quite simply, 'Nothing works' (Garland, 1993, 7). Institutionalized punishment fails to produce the good effects that might justify it. Indeed, not only do prisons fail, they actually exacerbate social problems. Prisons isolate offenders from their moral communities. The bare facts of prison life — large numbers of persons with criminal skill sets, antisocial attitudes, and disruptive behavior patterns held in close quarters for long periods of time and controlled by frustrated administrators employing coercive measures — prove prison communities to be most effective training grounds in antisocial behavior.

Pates' study of institutions of punishment explains the contradictory effects — the bad 'ends' — that prison environments effect. New inmates must harden themselves against their fellow prisoners and the guard community to survive this tough authoritarian environment. The processes of socialization in the new world of the prison, with its high degree of violence, sexual abuse, extortion, intimidation, and drug trafficking, causes inmates to revert to an alternative survival mode, 'a highly refined "con code" ' (13) that not only hones their skills of combat, deception, and brutality, but forces them to become crafty at forging strategic alliances with the most dangerous among the population. Pates states, 'the prison environment in particular is plagued by the very problems that society expects the penal system to prevent' (17).

Another crucial reason that penal institutions fail is that the moral enhancement of the prisoners is not the overriding value governing daily routines. Rather, prisons, as all bureaucracies, are machine-like organizations that function according to generalized standards of professional performance. Guards and administrators are concerned about such factors as efficiency, cost-effectiveness, wages and securing tenure. They do not see it as their charge to initiate dangerous men into the moral life.

'The evidence for the non-effectiveness of the criminal justice system as it now stands is overwhelming,' affirms Pates (20). Pates argues for an end to punishment as the system currently practices it. Since a huge industry has grown up around state punishment — 'probation officers, lawyers, judges, prison officers, therapists, case managers, their secretaries and office managers and trade unions' — the state is highly invested in maintaining the current system (1). The mammoth bureaucratic apparatus surrounding state punishment practices is founded upon a fundamental dilemma: societies are committed to an efficient and professional juridical body that deals objectively and rationally with social offenders, while they are also committed to the value and necessity *to justice* of a full consideration of all relevant moral particulars of the individual case of each social offender.

To illustrate the paralyzing nature of this foundational dilemma, Pates closes her book with a case study of a particular criminal, a repeat sex offender, Carl. As the reader follows the chronology of Carl's heinous attacks on his young victims — 'a six-year-old girl cousin, repeatedly; an eight-year-old girl, some four or five times; a five-year-old boy, once; a nine-year-old girl, once; a same-age girlfriend, several times; and two little girls, aged four and

six' — the reader is disposed to agree with any 'objective observer' that punishment should be swift and harsh (95). But as the details of Carl's particular case are unfolded — Carl, only 15 when he is on trial for his crimes, is one of five children raised in a remote rural area bereft of the least of human comforts or sanitary facilities; he grows up watching his father, in drunken rages, beat and rape his mother, until he too is submitted to these cruel acts — the reader's passion for a harsh justice is very suddenly paralyzed. The more we know about the perpetrator, the more he begins to resemble a victim.

Current juridical practices are hardened coercive structures of domination and submission that turn individuals with particular needs and problems into 'criminals' defined only by their criminal deeds. It is a small wonder that there is such a strong correlation between being imprisoned and further criminal behaviors. Individuals are not reformed, deterred, rehabilitated, treated, corrected, or trained through being incarcerated in modern prisons. Current punishment practices work only to improve the art of crime in the criminal population. Moral agents require a distinct degree of independence and social support to develop the qualities of compassion and empathy that allow them to evolve into moral agents and make their own sound moral judgments. Coercive institutions, argues Pates, do not help people to develop their powers of moral judgment; they do not contribute to the development of the moral and communal good of the society at large; nor do they promote the evolution of the society as a community *of ends*, that is, as a community that treats the least of its members as *ends in themselves* and not means to their ordered streets or their balanced state budgets.

This fine little philosophical book will be important to any educated adult. It would also make a fine introductory text for a university class in philosophy of law. Pates' argument is compelling: if it is the purpose of state institutions to help its citizens to become rational beings capable of self-discipline and self-legislation, it is high time for an end to the counterproductive punishment practices currently in use.

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**Andrew Pyle**
*Hume's* Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion.
New York: Continuum 2006.
Pp. 162.
US$90.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-8264-7567-1);
US$15.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-8264-7568-8).

This book provides an introduction to Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* in the form of a close commentary covering all sections of the text. It also includes a brief survey of the context in which Hume wrote the *Dialogues*, a discussion of the reception of the work and its subsequent influence, and a helpful guide to further reading.

The *Dialogues* are acknowledged today as some of Hume's finest philosophical writing. Moreover, they deal with an issue of perennial interest: what, if anything, does the spatial and temporal order that we observe in the universe tell us about the universe's ultimate origin? Religious believers have often held that this order, especially as manifested in the means-end adaptation exhibited by biological organisms, makes it reasonable to infer that the universe has been created or shaped by a divine mind. In the course of the discussion that takes place between the three main characters in the *Dialogues,* Hume provides several representative formulations of the pattern of reasoning that is supposed to justify such a conclusion, and he also subjects the probative value of this reasoning to intense critical scrutiny.

Pyle concurs with present-day interpretive orthodoxy by identifying Philo as the figure within the *Dialogues* whose arguments generally come closest to being arguments that Hume himself would have endorsed. However this identification, as Pyle emphasizes, leaves a surprising number of important exegetical issues unresolved, and much of the interest and utility of Pyle's book derives from his open-minded exploration of these remaining issues.

One such issue is the relationship between Philo's skepticism and the careful deliberations about evidence and reasons that apparently make up the bulk of the *Dialogues*. Pyle contends that Part 1 of the *Dialogues* sees Cleanthes refuting Philo's exaggeratedly skeptical contention that general considerations about the weakness of human cognitive faculties mean that we should automatically reject the supposition that we can arrive at rationally justified beliefs about such abstruse topics as the existence or properties of a divine being. And this supposed refutation of Philo's initial position permits the discussion to unfold thereafter with both Cleanthes and Philo committed to the need to judge religious claims on the basis of the specific evidence and arguments offered on their behalf.

Despite the ingenuity of this reading of Part 1, it strikes me as misrepresenting what is achieved by Cleanthes' arguments. Cleanthes is, in fact, deeply confused about the relationship between the doxastic side of radical skepticism and its stance on justification. He fails to distinguish between the contention that a claim lacks rational justification and the contention that

we can and ought to suspend judgment, and all that his arguments actually show is that the attempt to engage in suspension of judgment on all everyday matters or indeed all scientific claims is psychologically unsustainable. Philo's radical skepticism, like the Academic philosophy defended elsewhere by Hume, is a view about the absence of justification rather than a view about the propriety and usefulness of suspension of judgment. Consequently Cleanthes' contention that experiment and experience can make suspension of judgment about some scientific theories as impossible as suspension of judgment about everyday commonplaces is no threat to Philo's skepticism, and merely sets the stage for Philo's vigorous exposition of the case for supposing that no comparable experiential support is ever available for claims about the existence and nature of a deity.

Another interpretative issue that remains disconcertingly open even if we accept the primacy of Philo's arguments is what we should say about Hume's own position. Throughout most of the *Dialogues* Philo appears to be successfully subverting Cleanthes' contention that the order found in the universe gives us substantial reasons of an everyday kind to believe in the existence of a divine being that bears significant analogies to a human mind. In Part 12, however, Philo performs an apparent volte-face, and asserts that despite his preceding arguments 'no one has a deeper sense of religion impressed on his mind, or pays more profound adoration to the Divine Being, as he discovers himself to reason, in the inexplicable contrivance and artifice of nature.'

Pyle's response to this abrupt reversal is to develop an interpretation of the *Dialogues* that denies that any character within it expresses views that are fully consistent with Hume's own position. Pyle argues that Hume has specifically chosen to write in dialogue form in order to guide the reader towards an undogmatic atheism that is not avowed by any of his characters but is nevertheless strongly supported by an overall case that emerges from the interaction between those characters.

Interestingly, this interpretation places considerable emphasis on the generally neglected debate between Demea and Cleanthes. According to Pyle, much of this debate represents Hume's attempt to impale the orthodox theist on the horns of a dilemma. Demea's rejection of the appropriateness of an anthropomorphic analogy between God and the human mind appears to reduce talk about God to a mere set of empty words with no meaningful content. Yet if we follow Cleanthes in embracing this analogy, we seem to be committed to thinking of God in a way that subverts the religiously essential distance between human beings and the divine. Moreover, if we then add Philo's objections to the mix, we find that Cleanthes' arguments are incapable of giving us any grounds for supposing that the ultimate cause of the universe's order resembles a human mind any more closely than it resembles a rotting turnip.

This account of Hume's personal position has considerable plausibility, and the judicious way in which it is articulated by Pyle is representative of the overall merits of his book. Pyle consistently manages to combine clear exegetical guidance with a thoughtful presentation of alternative interpretations of Hume's intentions, and he also pulls off the feat of providing

straightforward clarifications of specific argumentative moves in the *Dialogues* while developing in the background a unifying interpretation that will interest even people engaged in scholarly research on Hume's thinking about religion.

**Alan Bailey**


**Kenneth M. Sayre**
*Metaphysics and Method in Plato's* Statesman.
New York: Cambridge University Press 2006.
Pp. 277.
US$84.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-521-86608-8).


The *Statesman*, like the *Phaedrus* and the *Sophist* before it, employs what has come to be known among scholars as the 'method of division' to precisely identify various kinds of expertise that scientists and craftspeople might possess. Angling and weaving are examples familiar to students of these dialogues. One aim of the *Statesman* is to discriminate statesmanship from among a variety of other crafts. According to Sayre, this task amounts to identifying the necessary and sufficient conditions for being a statesman. The other aim of the dialogue is to make its participants better dialecticians both through practicing the method and by diagnosing problems when the results go awry. Sayre's study (hereafter, *MMPS*) is a thorough account of the method's dual use in the *Statesman* and a provocative discussion of its metaphysical relevance for Plato.

Sayre's conclusions about the *Statesman* are carefully developed through a comparative analysis with its companion dialogues (and, to a somewhat lesser extent, the *Republic* and the *Philebus*). The three do not each deploy the method of division in precisely the same way, nor is it clear whether or not Plato is always consistent in what he says about the method in each case. Here are some examples: the *Statesman's* companion pieces feature the method of division being used in conjunction with a process of 'collection', a feature lacking in the *Statesman*; division mostly takes place according to a 'right hand' sequence, though Plato at least once favors a 'left hand' sequence; division mostly involves a bifurcation, but on rare occasion Plato produces a more complex division. By resolving the interpretive and philosophical problems that thus arise, Sayre is able to reveal a reading of the *Statesman* — and an account of the method of divi-

sion generally — that is both intellectually satisfying and, in its positive sense, controversial.

Perhaps the central philosophical contribution of *MMPS* is its approach to 283c-285c of the dialogue, a passage which has become noted for the interpretive and translational difficulties to which it leads. Specifically at issue are the mentions by the Eleatic Stranger of 'two kinds of measurement' and the expression, ὑπεροχή καὶ ἔλλειψις ('excess and deficiency'). The larger portion of Part 2 of *MMPS* ('Metaphysics') is devoted to resolving the troubles posed by each of these items and to revealing the rather substantial philosophical gains made by Sayre's solutions. In doing so, Sayre enlists the help of select passages from the *Philebus* which, he shows, not only clears up the troublesome *Statesman* passage but helps the metaphysical foundations of the dialogue to more clearly emerge. In this connection, scholars will likely take great interest in Sayre's discussion of how to think of Plato's Forms as numbers which afford dialecticians access to a special kind of measurement.

Also of special philosophical interest is Sayre's discussion (Chapters 11 and 12) of dividing 'down the middle'. One central problem here concerns determining what Plato's criteria are for dividing an art in one way rather than another. (In Plato's division paradigm for the art of angling, for instance, the art of animal hunting gets divided into the art of hunting land animals and the art of hunting water animals, but *not* into, say, the art of hunting those animals which upset my garbage and the art of hunting all other animals.) Plato's instruction is for us to divide 'according to Forms', an instruction which, for Sayre, is a matter of dividing according to what is dialectically useful, rather than useless. His ensuing discussion of this point is both careful and philosophically appealing.

Sayre divides (fittingly) *MMPS* into two parts, 'Method' and 'Metaphysics', each of which receives what he considers separate introductions. This does not mean that the first part is simply expository or without any philosophical punch. Most of Sayre's comparative analyses and basic interpretive efforts take place here, and, as many philosophers anyway will grant, these activities require as much philosophical skill and good sense as any other. In this connection, scholars will want to take note of his extensive discussions of Plato's critical term, παράδειγμα (paradigm), and how Plato's use of paradigms informs the method of division.

Additional strengths of Sayre's work include its meticulous attention to addressing those questions and problems which are first acknowledged but then relegated for later consideration. In fact, the final chapter of is wholly devoted to taking up each of the remaining loose ends that do not figure prominently in the more natural flow of his exposition. Another strength is the frequent and consistent notation of the Greek for those wishing to maintain as close a reading of Plato's texts as possible. Moreover, since Sayre's analysis of the *Statesman* heavily relies upon analyses of other dialogues, scholars with special interests in each of the *Phaedrus* and the *Sophist* (and, to a lesser extent, the *Philebus*) will also benefit

from his thorough examination of key passages from those works. (The present study is in many respects a continuation of the author's *Plato's Late Ontology* [1983, Princeton]. There, it is the *Philebus* that receives the bulk of his attention with regard to the issues taken up in *MMPS*.) Also of special note is the appendix which catalogues expressions used by Aristotle and his commentators (Alexander, Themistius, Philoponus and Simplicius) which are equivalents for the expression, μέγα καὶ μικρόν (the Great and the Small). The significance of this information, as Sayre thoroughly explains (Chapters 7 and 8), is that it helps tremendously in elucidating Plato's expression, 'excess and deficiency', as it occurs in central passages of the *Statesman*.

Discussion of extant scholarship is mostly relegated to footnotes, and focuses mainly upon the likes of Miller, Santa Cruz, Moravcsik, Cohen, Griswold, Rowe, Waterfield, Wedin, Skemp, Annas and Lafrance. The volume includes a bibliography, general index, index of names and an *index locorum*.

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**J. L. Schellenberg**
*The Wisdom to Doubt:*
*A Justification of Religious Scepticism.*
Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 2007.
Pp. 326.
US$49.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-8014-4554-5).

This book is a major contribution to the study of religious epistemology. It advances and improves the theory of religious scepticism begun in Schellenberg's earlier work *Prolegomena to a Philosophy of Religion* (2005). His principal guiding argument is for an uncompromising form of agnosticism, which he calls 'complete religious scepticism'.

The book is divided into three parts, each of which presents a discrete component of Schellenberg's sceptical thesis. The arguments are well crafted and should be accessible to both novice and expert alike. It would be beneficial though to have first acquainted oneself with Schellenberg's *Prolegomena*, as most of the introduction is devoted to re-introducing and defining terminology that was more comprehensively established in it.

In Part 1 Schellenberg divides 'the neglected arguments for religious scepticism' (12) into four main categories, which he calls 'modes' (which can be further combined to form a total of seven modes). The first is the Subject Mode, which addresses issues stemming from the limitations endemic in human understanding. Due to these constraints, there are inevitably instances of intellectual oversight, where there is information available which is either overlooked or inaccessible to us. This means that there may be evidence that we have not yet discovered, or which we do not have the capacity to recognise. Schellenberg believes that the fact of this finitude makes the justification of specific types of belief particularly difficult. Conspicuous amongst these are religious and irreligious beliefs, where the difficulties prove to be 'insurmountable' (13).

Schellenberg then progresses to the Object Mode, which draws attention to a unique problem that derives from religious (and by extension irreligious) belief, namely ultimism. Schellenberg believes that it is beyond the capacity of finite human beings to understand the ultimate nature of reality, as it is inherently 'something infinitely profound' (51). Thus, we should accept that it is most probable that we have imperfect and inadequate notions of it.

The Retrospective Mode is concerned with human history and religious claims. The limited time in which we have pondered religious questions means that it is premature for us to suppose that we have evolved to a position of complete understanding. The immaturity of humanity has often led to blind adherence to dogmatic and insufficiently grounded beliefs. 'Because religious belief is wrapped up with ultimate concern, it has tended to go hand-in-hand with a rather fierce loyalty. Nothing less than complete devotion is appropriate where such a reality is involved.' What further compounds the problem is the fact that the more attached one becomes to one's beliefs, the more difficult it is to remain open to their falsity and to engage in investigations that might show them to be false (84). This in turn has had a stunting effect on the development of thought about the ultimate, as it has proven inimical to creative and critical thinking.

The Prospective Mode considers the various investigative issues that arise when we reflectively contemplate our open future. Schellenberg advances the idea that the future may involve enormous changes in the intellectual and religious realms. Therefore, it is distinctly possible that any views we currently hold on ultimism may appear implausible to more fully informed individuals in the future. Therefore, there is good reason to doubt that the any evidence so far examined regarding religious claims is representative of the total evidence. Consequently, there are grounds to conclude that the evidence that humans have amassed to date is drastically insufficient. Furthermore, when we consider the likelihood of this unrepresentativeness, we must be sceptical about whether the evidence that we currently have available is less than *good evidence* for ultimism, irrespective of its apparent force (92). This state of affairs is taken to further strengthen the justification for religious scepticism.

Schellenberg proceeds to combine these modes into one comprehensive mode which he calls the Presumption Mode. This mode utilises the strengths of each of its components and is a more powerful argument for religious scepticism than any of its antecedents alone. In conclusion to the first part of the book, the author presents a series of truth-oriented arguments for religious scepticism, which he contends there are no pragmatic reasons to refute.

In Part 2 Schellenberg makes specific applications of the points raised in the first section to arguments associated with naturalism and religious experience, which he considers to be central sources of nonsceptical attitudes towards religion and the prevalent neglect of sceptical reasoning in general. The results of this enterprise serve to bolster each of the modes previously examined.

Finally, in Part 3, Schellenberg concentrates on the central concept of traditional theism, namely that of a personal God. He uses the issues of divine hiddenness, evil and free will to show that there are internal incoherencies in traditional religious belief. He proposes that these incoherencies are forceful enough to warrant doubt that the traditional idea of God is sufficiently convincing as an ultimate principle. He further contends that when these ideas are combined the impetus for such scepticism is significantly increased.

This is an excellent work, saturated with original thinking and methodically credible argument. It is a major contribution to the contemporary debate about the epistemology of religious belief, and it canvasses most of the important recent work in this area. The author is convinced that the prudent adoption of religious scepticism does not lead to a position from which one cannot further advance, but rather serves as a portal to innovative thinking about religious possibilities. Irrespective of one's personal stance on religious scepticism, this is a work that demands consideration and will have to be engaged with, if one wishes to contribute to the philosophy of religion. Because of the nature of its subject matter, it will appeal to a broad readership within philosophy, theology and related disciplines.

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**Thomas Lloyd Short**
*Peirce's Theory of Signs.*
New York: Cambridge University Press 2007.
Pp. 391.
US$85.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-521-84320-1).

This book is a remarkable effort to produce a comprehensive and accessible study of Peircean semiotics. The lack of a systematic presentation of Peirce's theory of signs has been for decades a reason for concern for Peirce scholars and philosophers who tried to approach his ideas. Short engages in an attempt to demonstrate the relevance of Peirce's theory of signs in contemporary philosophical thought, and he brings together issues from semiotics, logic, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind and the history and philosophy of science.

The book's aim is twofold. Short proposes a strong interpretation of Peirce's semiotics, which supports a naturalistic and yet non-reductive account of the human mind. This is combined with a lucid examination of Peirce's defense of the inherently objective nature of scientific inquiry as a privileged means of producing knowledge about an independently existing reality.

Chapter 1 provides useful background information on antecedents and alternatives to Peircean semiotics. In Chapter 2, Short discusses Peirce's early theory of signs, treated in the 'New List of Categories' and in the anti-Cartesian essays dated 1868-69. The controversial arguments presented in this chapter hinge on two main claims. First, Short maintains that the 'New List of Categories', usually considered by Peircean scholars as a keystone towards the development of his triadic theory of signs, is in fact only 'a stepping stone' and therefore it is 'not required for the mastery of his later thought' (32). This interpretation is in sharp contrast with a whole line of inquiry in Peircean scholarship, which tends to emphasize the continuity of Peirce's thought. The hiatus that Short poses between the 'New List' and Peirce's mature semiotics should be approached with some caution, especially by the uninitiated reader. The Kantian derivation of Peirce's categorial apparatus as it was first elaborated in the 'New List' has a crucial relevance for the development of Peirce's phaneroscopy and his theory of signs, and Short seems to dismiss it too easily.

Short's second claim revolves around the detection of three flaws in Peirce's 1868-69 theory of thought-sign. The first flaw consists of an infinite regress of representation deriving from the doctrine that every thought-sign interprets a preceding one. Short points out that this implies a form of idealism in which thought lacks objects not constituted by thinking (42). The other two flaws derive directly from the doctrine of thought-sign. The second flaw is that, if a sign's significance consists in its being interpreted by another sign, then those interpretants cannot be mistaken, with the result that significance is assigned arbitrarily. The third flaw consists of the risk of a circular account of significance, deriving from the assumption of the dependence of significance upon interpretation (43). Short's hypothesis is

that Peirce was aware of these three difficulties and strived to correct them in successive steps between 1877 and 1907. This process of revision culminated in his mature semiotics, which included a robust articulation of the concept of index, his pragmatic theory of meaning and a complex concept of teleology.

Teleology and the problem of final causation are central themes of Short's book (Chapters 4 - 6). His examination of Peirce's notion of finious (or, as he defines them, 'anisotropic') processes serves the purpose of demonstrating that his mature semeiotics is developed in parallel with a naturalistic account of teleology. Short insightfully articulates a concept of teleology and finious processes as based on a natural tendency or propensity rather than on subjective intentions. He proposes a concept of purpose as 'a type of outcome for which an agent acts or for which something was selected as a means' (110), and brings a sign's significance to bear on the purposes of possible interpreters rather than individual minds. This interpretation departs from Peirce's original formulation; however, it represents a fresh attempt to rescue teleology and final causation and give them new visibility in contemporary philosophical discourse.

In Chapters 7 through 9 Short explores Peirce's conceptions of the relations between signs, objects and interpretant, and presents an overview of the development of his trichotomies of signs. In Chapter 10 he draws illuminating connections between Peirce's theory of signs and contemporary debates on meaning and reference in philosophy of language. Peirce dissociated meaning (which he assumed to be conceptual) from reference, but did not propose a concept of rigid designation. Short shows that his mature pragmatism is not a verificationist theory of meaning. Rather than explaining meaning with a finite list of verification conditions, he posed no limit to the growth of symbols. In Short's terms, for Peirce new verifications are 'discoveries . . . made through a symbol's application' (288).

In Chapter 11 Short identifies Peirce's theory of mind with a 'naturalistic history of thought' (289). He articulates Peirce's theory of mind in parallel with the concepts of purposefulness and intentionality, and contrasts it with contemporary functionalist and physicalist approaches. Once again, Short seems to depart from Peirce's original formulations; yet his account respects the ultimate aims of his mature pragmatism.

In the final chapter, Short explores Peirce's concept of science and his theory of scientific inquiry. A valuable point in the chapter is his critique of simplistic interpretations of Peirce's concept of convergence and his derivation of a theory of truth which appears to anticipate contemporary deflationism. The two theories address different questions: where Peirce spoke of belief, the deflationists often speak of warranted assertion (332-3). Yet, a careful consideration of Peirce's often misread 'The Fixation of Belief' (1877) reveals a developmental theory of truth which is complementary to deflationist accounts.

Peirce scholars might remain slightly disappointed by Short's unjustified dismissal of Peirce's early thought and of the continuity of his theory of signs.

Despite this, his attempt to demonstrate the relevance of Peirce's semiotics in contemporary philosophical thought hinges on a balanced interplay between convincing arguments and documented research. This book insightfully unravels the necessity of overcoming the contemporary philosophical tendency to 'atomize issues' (xi), and there is reason to believe that Short's comprehensive study will set the agenda for interesting future developments in Peircean scholarship.

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**Walter Sinnott-Armstrong**
*Moral Skepticisms.*
New York: Oxford University Press 2006.
Pp. 288.
US$48.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-195-18722-4).

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first book entirely devoted to examining the different varieties of moral skepticism and to assessing the main replies to moral skeptical arguments. Sinnott-Armstrong's aim is to determine whether, how, and to what extent our moral beliefs can be justified. His discussion of these issues is remarkably clear, thorough, and solid.

The book is divided into two parts. The first presents the basic concepts of moral epistemology and the arguments advanced by different forms of moral skepticism. It offers a characterization of moral epistemology (Chapter 1), and examines whether moral beliefs are truth-apt (Chapter 2), true (Chapter 3) and justified (Chapter 4). It introduces the notion of contrast classes (Chapter 5), and expounds Sinnott-Armstrong's own variety of moral skepticism, namely, 'classy moral Pyrrhonism' (Chapter 6). The second part is devoted to analyzing four ethical theories purporting to justify moral beliefs — naturalism (Chapter 7), normativism (Chapter 8), intuitionism (Chapter 9), and coherentism (Chapter 10) — as well as their responses to moral nihilism.

Sinnott-Armstrong describes his own position as skeptical. However, it is not a form of ontological moral skepticism, which is probably the most common type of moral skepticism in contemporary philosophy. He maintains that the arguments against the existence of moral facts do not establish their conclusions; at most they require us to suspend judgment about the existence of such facts. Similarly, he holds that the most common and important arguments against moral nihilism are not conclusive, although he thinks that

they show some of our beliefs to be justified — not absolutely, but in limited ways. Because he rejects that our moral beliefs are unqualifiedly justified, but accepts that they may be partially justified, Sinnott-Armstrong characterizes his outlook as a 'moderate moral skepticism'. How does he support this mitigated skepticism? The key lies in the notion of 'contrast class'. A contrast class is a set of propositions which are incompatible with each other, so that if one is justified in believing a proposition P out of a contrast class C, it is because one has grounds that rule out all the other propositions of C but not P. Now, a belief may be, at the same time, justified out of one contrast class, but not out of another. For it may be justified, e.g., out of a contrast class which includes all the alternatives which can be eliminated by using our usual epistemic standards, but not out of a contrast class which also includes extreme alternatives such as skeptical hypotheses, which are systematically uneliminable. The question that naturally arises is which contrast class is really relevant, i.e., which contrast class contains those alternatives that must be eliminated to be able to affirm that a given belief is epistemically justified without qualification. Sinnott-Armstrong maintains that this question is impossible to answer, so he suspends judgment about which contrast class, if any, is really relevant, even in a particular context. (This is why he describes himself as a meta-skeptic about real relevance, or as a 'classy Pyrrhonist'.) As a result, moral beliefs can be justified or unjustified, not absolutely, but solely relative to different contrast classes. Given that Sinnott-Armstrong suspends judgment about real relevance, it seems that his position is a sort of epistemic relativism about moral beliefs.

Although several issues invite discussion, I will limit myself to two of them. First, I find surprising Sinnott-Armstrong's views that 'second-order beliefs about the epistemic status of moral beliefs cannot force us to give up the moral beliefs that we need to live well' (viii), and that the skeptical 'position about the epistemic status of moral beliefs need not trickle down and infect anyone's substantive moral beliefs or actions' (14). This is a clear case of what has been called 'insulation', which takes place when (some of) our ordinary beliefs are deemed to be immune from the conclusions of philosophical arguments, and hence from philosophical skepticism. Even if insulation is a common phenomenon in contemporary philosophy, I confess my difficulty in comprehending how, if we suspend judgment about the epistemic credentials of our moral beliefs, we can still affirm that we are epistemically justified in holding a number of them. I understand that, in such a situation, holding moral beliefs may have some kind of *practical* justification, but this of course does not confer any *epistemic* justification on them.

Second, readers familiar with Sextus Empiricus might wonder whether Sinnott-Armstrong's outlook may be legitimately labeled 'Pyrrhonian'. It is clear that the ancient Pyrrhonist would agree both with the idea that, as things stand, we can rule out neither moral nihilism nor moral realism, and with refraining from affirming that any one contrast class is really relevant. On the other hand, he would not consider his skeptical stance to be fully compatible with Sinnott-Armstrong's moderate moral skepticism for at least

three reasons. First, he would reject the idea that our substantive moral beliefs are insulated and immune from philosophical reflection. Second, given that Sinnott-Armstrong's moral skepticism does not prevent him from affirming that his 'positive moral beliefs are true and correspond to moral facts' (58), the Pyrrhonist would consider his position to be 'dogmatic', because it makes assertions about matters of objective fact, even if these epistemic claims are only relativized. Finally, I doubt the Pyrrhonist would accept that our moral beliefs may be justified out of a limited contrast class. Indeed, he would probably argue that, even if one restricts oneself to limited contrast classes, it does not seem possible to choose among the competing alternatives constituting the class because they appear equally persuasive. These differences between Sinnott-Armstrong's position and Pyrrhonism may not represent a pressing problem for him, since he points out that he does not care whether his 'position gets labeled "skepticism"', because the 'name does not matter to any issue of importance'. Rather, what matters is both what it is possible to accomplish 'when we try to justify our moral beliefs', and 'which debates in epistemology make sense' (251; cf. 106n27). These reservations, however, concern not merely historical accuracy (which, to be sure, is not irrelevant, because Sinnott-Armstrong calls his position 'skepticism' to 'reveal its connections to the Pyrrhonian tradition' [251]). Rather, they are motivated primarily by the fact that the Pyrrhonian stance and Pyrrhonian arguments have been playing a key part in current epistemological discussions for some time now, so that it is crucial to get an accurate picture of Pyrrhonism when dealing with issues of knowledge and justification.

Given its philosophical rigor and insight and the import of the issues it deals with, I highly recommend this book not solely to those interested in moral epistemology but to anyone concerned with epistemology in general.

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**Jan Westerhoff**
*Ontological Categories.*
Toronto and New York: Oxford University
Press 2005.
Pp. 275.
CDN$105.95/US$74.00
(cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-19-928504-4).

Westerhoff's book investigates the nature and status of ontological categories. Chapter 1 surveys seven systems of categories all of which, other than Aristotle's, are recent. Two questions are of central concern to the book (20): What makes a category an ontological category? What relationships obtain between ontological categories?

The first question predominates, and in Chapter 2 Westerhoff points to three features generally held to characterize ontological categories that may serve as bases for attempts at an answer (24). First, 'they are the most *general* kinds of things'. Second, they can explain 'why certain *substitutions* in a statement (such as "prime" for "odd" in "the number nine is odd") make the statement just false, while others make it meaningless (such as substituting "sweet" for "odd").' Third, 'they provide the *identity criteria* for classes of objects'.

Westerhoff discusses some attempts to provide a definition of an ontological category by appeal to degree of generality. The 'cut-off point problem' (35) is a difficulty for such attempts. Supposing that the ontological categories are classes at and above a certain degree of generality, how can we draw a line, non-arbitrarily, between classes that count as *ontological* categories and classes that are insufficiently general? Attempts to define 'ontological category' by reference to generality fail to solve this problem or have other prohibitive costs (25-40).

Ryle's intersubstitutability account and its development by Sommers are discussed, but (after Smart) these accounts are too liberal as to what is to count as an ontological category (48-51). Carnap's intersubstitutability account (51-6) solves this problem but has the 'implausible' (55) implications that the containment of one ontological category within another is impossible and that an object in one ontological category cannot share 'a property with an object in any other ontological category' (54).

The appeal to criteria of identity jars with the systems of categories set out in Chapter 1 (62). Depicting the ontological categories as ultimate sortals precludes ontological categories from standing in containment relations (63). For this and other reasons, 'the notion of identity — at least on its own — cannot provide us with a satisfactory account of ontological categories' (63).

In Chapters 3 and 4, Westerhoff sets out his positive account, which aims to avoid the cut-off problem and the imposition of implausible restrictions on what is to count as a system of categories. The basis of Westerhoff's account is the 'notion of a state of affairs' (66), the centrality and primitiveness of which is defended in Chapter 3.

In Chapter 4, the idea of a state of affairs is applied in order to try to specify what makes a category an ontological category. A '*constituent-set*' (91) consists of the things into which a state of affairs can be decomposed. With each state of affairs is associated one or more constituent-sets (depending on the number of ways in which it can be decomposed). Taking 'the state of affairs denoted by "Albert loves Becca"' (91), we have the constituent-set {Albert, loving, Becca}. With the notion of a '*form-set*' (91), the idea of intersubstitutability is revived. 'We will define form-sets as the constituents of states of affairs which can be intersubstituted in states of affairs to form new ones. Thus, Albert, Becca, and Charles will be in the same form-set, as will be the relations of loving, admiring, and so on' (91). Our intuitions about ontological intersubstitutability, i.e., substitutability of constituents in states of affairs, 'are informed by linguistic intuitions. Our intuitions about *grammaticality* (or rather the lack of it) are one such source of information: that the relations of loving and sitting between belong to different types can be inferred from the fact that "sits between" cannot be plugged in for "loves" in "Adam loves Becca" *salva congruitate*. Although not reducible to them, intuitions about *meaninglessness* can also inform our intuitions about ontological fitting: we can argue that being prime and being green belong to different types since "green" cannot be intersubstituted with "prime" in "17 is prime" *salva significatione*' (93).

We can imagine possible but non-actual states of affairs, such as there being pink elephants, but we cannot image any associated states of affairs in the cases of ungrammatical or meaningless sentences (94).

Westerhoff then invokes the notion of a *base-set*: 'a minimal subset of a set of form-sets which can collectively construct all the remaining form-sets in the set (is) a *basis* of the set of form-sets, and its elements (are) *base-sets*' (96). The base-sets are ontological categories (99), but a form-set can have more than one basis (97). The 'constituents of states of affairs can be sorted into different form-sets' (116) and these form-sets, in turn, into base-sets (188). Crudely, since the base-sets are ontological categories and a form-set can have more than one basis, there is no unique system of ontological categories. The role of ontological categories in our systematization of the world is analogous to the role of axioms in systems of logic: as there is more than one way of axiomatising a logic, so there is more than one way of categorially classifying the world (134-5, cf. 208).

Chapter 5 argues that the distinction between individuals and properties is shown, by the foregoing account of ontological categories, not to be an ontological distinction at all. Chapter 6 concerns the account of states of affairs defended in the book, its role in generating the account of categories, and the philosophical implications of these accounts.

Pivotal to his account of intersubstitutability is Westerhoff's view that sentences involving selection errors (e.g., '17 is green') are meaningless. Another account sees them as meaningful, but false. Our inability to imagine a state of affairs associated with '17 is green' is, on this account, to be expected and not a mark of meaninglessness. It is impossible for 17 to be colored and

so impossible for it to be green. Since it is impossible for 17 to be green, it is false that 17 is green. Surprisingly, Westerhoff provides only a short, weak argument (49, n. 45) against the view that selection errors are falsehoods. The book is thorough in other ways, shows considerable scholarly and technical prowess, and should be read and discussed.

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**Shannon Winnubst**, ed.
*Reading Bataille Now*.
Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2007.
Pp. 300.
US$65 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-253-34822-7);
US$24.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-253-21882-7).

In her 'Introduction', Winnubst argues that Bataille, a 'literary bad boy' still associated in Anglophone scholarship almost exclusively with his 'erotic fiction' (2), remains neglected in the realm of serious philosophy, political theory and, especially, economics. The essays in her collection, which 'speak from the contemporary political space of transnational capitalism, hyper-moralism (and) liberalism', focus accordingly on Bataille's three-volume opus on political economy, *The Accursed Share*. Bataille would have approved: of all his writings he considered those concerning economic theory to be the most important, to the point of imagining (rather fancifully) that *The Accursed Share* might win him a Nobel Prize in Economics.

This book is divided into four Parts, and includes a preface by Alphonso Lingis. The essays in Part 1, 'Situating Bataille', deal with Bataille's relation to the Marxist tradition, stressing the degree to which he deviated from or transgressed traditional leftist positions. For Jesse Goldhammer, while Bataille 'owes a theoretical debt to late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century French anarcho-syndicalism' (17), he departs from Marxist and anarchist positions by incorporating into politics a highly original notion of sacrifice as 'a mediated form of self-demolition' (23). Amy E. Wendling argues that Bataille conceives of nature not in Marxist terms of scarcity, but in terms of surplus and profligacy, a stance she attributes to Bataille's 'familiarity with premodern and medieval epistemologies' (40) (Bataille was a medievalist by formation). Focusing on Bataille's shift in emphasis from production to consumption, Wendling suggests that Bataille's human being, unlike the beleaguered bourgeois who can think only in terms of accumulation and self-preservation, 'does not stand over against a hostile nature' (41) but partici-

pates in an economy of plenitude and 'sovereign consumption' (46). Pierre Lamarche examines the reasons behind Bataille's recourse to the Marxist notion of 'use value' in his polemic with André Breton, and shows how this concept informs Bataille's thinking of sovereignty in *The Accursed Share*.

Part 2, 'Pleasures and the Myth of Transgression', explores the erotic dimension of Bataille's theory of economy (volume two of *The Accursed Share* is entitled *The History of Eroticism*). Shannon Winnubst takes off from Bataille's distinction between sexuality and eroticism, which in itself shifts emphasis away from a heterosexual (reproductive) paradigm of sexuality and privileges instead the register of pleasure. Through an analysis of contemporary sodomy laws, she demonstrates the pertinence of Bataille's a-telic notion of sexuality to queer theory and politics. Zeynep Direk sees Bataille as interested in 'the possibility of sexed communication beyond sexual identities' (105). Invoking Irigaray and Levinas, she seeks to show that Bataille's text refuses to objectify the female body; rather, it opens up the question of an 'ethics of eros' that, accounting for the paradoxes and violence of eroticism, might be generative of 'new norms' (110). Alison Leigh Brown's contribution is a sort of *fantasia* intermingling autobiography, fiction and literary criticism. It revolves around Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, Bataille's essay on this novel in *Literature and Evil*, Bataille's novel *Blue of Noon*, and the figure of Malvolio from *Twelfth Night*.

Part 3, 'Bodies and Animality', opens with an essay on bird-watching by Ladelle McWhorter. Drawing on the writings of Charles Darwin and on feminist critiques of reason, she explores the idea that human mimicking of animals represents 'a kind of embodied coming to know' (160). Lucio Angelo Privitello examines laughter and animality in Bataille, arguing that the two are linked because 'both deny "project" by consuming their very sovereignty' (169). Laughter, of which Privitello offers a welcome typology, can evoke something of the intimacy that was replaced in the modern world (according to one of Bataille's major theses in *The Accursed Share*) by labor. Dorothy Holland, noting that the theater has often been associated with the potential for transgression, explores issues of performance and staging in theater, focusing on *Mnemonic*, a 'devised work' by the London-based Theatre de Complicite. Her reflections, tangentially related to Bataille's *oeuvre*, are often suggestive, especially as regards the Bataillean preoccupations of experimentalism, dramatization, nudity, and above all play (in the sense of performance, but also as the opposite of work).

Part 4, 'Sovereign Politics', looks at some ways in which Bataille's theory of general economy might alter the understanding and even practice of politics today. Andrew Cutrofello makes an ingenious parallel between Shakespeare's critique of nascent capitalism in *The Merchant of Venice* and Bataille's concept of sovereignty and the aporetic ethics this concept implies. Richard A. Lee Jr., partly on the basis of personal recollections, muses about thinghood, sovereignty and sacrifice in Bataille. According to Lee, Bataille's shift from the restricted to the general economy allows us to move beyond 'concernful dealings with the world of things' (249), a re-positioning he situates usefully

in relation to Heidegger. Allan Stoekl reflects on the relevance of Bataille's theory of expenditure, excess and waste in an era of resource scarcity and ecological anxiety. Drawing on contemporary theories of sustainability, he posits 'a kind of ethical aftereffect' (261) of Bataille's economic theory whereby expenditure might remain compatible with survival and preservation.

Several of the essays here are what the editor calls 'performative', 'playfully inviting us to engage . . . excess through their very writing' (8). The inclusion of scholarly, creative, and hybrid essays gives the collection a catholic, wide-ranging (even free-wheeling) feel: Hegel, Nietzsche and Mauss are dutifully referenced, but so are Evelyn Fox Keller and Steven A. LeBlanc, Donna Haraway and Jerzy Grotowski; even the Blue Oyster Cult gets a mention. The consideration of issues related to theater and performance here opens up a new and exciting avenue in Bataille studies, complementing existing and better-known scholarship on ritual and sacrifice. The most searching contributions are those (e.g., Wendling, Stoekl) that revise and re-vitalize Bataille's economic theory by bringing it into relation with contemporary work in biology, archeology, environmentalism and eco-economy. In these essays we get a sense of the scope and potential of the 'Copernican transformation' of political economy that Bataille sought to effect in *The Accursed Share*.

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**J. Jeremy Wisnewski**
*Wittgenstein and Ethical Inquiry:*
*A Defense of Ethics as Clarification.*
New York: Continuum 2007.
Pp. 150.
US$127.54 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-8264-8774-2).

Because he said different and apparently inconsistent things about ethics, Wittgenstein's (W's) relation to the subject is fraught with controversy. The early W held ethics to be impossible because ethical propositions fail to mean. Attempts to put ethics into words could only end in nonsense, albeit important nonsense, since it reveals ethics to be transcendent. Since the later W rejected narrow doctrines of meaning and method, the way to doing ethics was open to him. So, why didn't he do ethics? Available books on the subject have not provided answers, so a fresh look at the issue is welcome.

Despite the title, Wisnewski says his book is not 'really a book about W and ethics, but a book on ethics using Wittgensteinian methods' (xi). The task of

ethics in a Wittgensteinian (Wian) spirit is to clarify the hazy and troubled human predicament by making explicit our value orientation, which in turn sheds light on the normative dimension of our lives. The only way to achieve this task, according to Wisnewski, is through phenomenological analysis and ethical theorizing which help us to see our way through the world. These are reasons enough to attempt to put ethics into words.

The book divides into three parts. The first lays the ground for a Wian approach to ethics conceived as clarification, and then surveys and assesses the history of the reception of W in ethics. Part of W's toolbox is a working distinction between assertoric (empirical) propositions that say something about the world and propositions that clarify practices by articulating rules. W's take on ethical theory, we are told, is that such propositions could not be empirical, hence ethical theories are really concerned with clarification and understanding our sense of the good and the right. They may be illuminating or obfuscatory, depending on their ability to allow us to see the normative in a clear light. 'Far from relegating ethical theory to nonsense or the merely private sphere,' as the received view would have it, W is said to provide us with an alternative way to understand ethical theories. Their function is not to tell us what we should be doing, but to clarify the normative aspect of our lives.

The second part of the book spells out the implications of this view for modern ethical theories. Kant's deontology and Mill's utilitarianism, argues the author, are not really action-guiding as the standard view has it. They are not meant to specify a rational procedure for decision making; rather, they are intended to clarify aspects of our moral form of life. So there is no tension between ethical theorizing and a Wian perspective on ethics as clarification: 'We can engage in ethical theory and can be Wian without any kind of schizophrenia.'

The third part takes up and responds to the reception of W by critical theory, in particular by Herbert Marcuse, who labels W's work as quietist and conservative. Since W's philosophy is confined to the description of our forms of life, it apparently leaves everything as it is. Philosophy in this vein refuses its traditional functions of critique and exploration of the possible, and thus abandons its social responsibilities. This is a misguided objection, Wisnewski argues, for describing language games leaves space for critique by identifying tensions within our practices. Furthermore, different clarifications of a practice leave room for critical appraisal and subsequent choice. Critical theory then could profit from Wian resources.

Here are some first impressions. The author says some surprising and provocative things about W and ethical theorizing, and some insightful things about a conception of ethics as clarification. What is provocative, however, is sometimes less than compelling, and what is insightful seems descriptive of contemporary ethics — as long as concerns of clarification are twinned with action-guidance. I found it disconcerting that an author denies what he is actually doing: discussing W and ethics. The book critiques received interpretations of W on ethics as well as articulates a conception of ethics as clarification employing Wian methods. Yet the author disavows part of what

he is doing, leaving the impression of a calculated effort to cultivate a broader readership by including both readers of W as well as of ethics. The articulation of an ethics of clarification could have been better accomplished without self-imposed exegetical burdens.

A few misgivings of a more serious nature. To show that Wian ethics is compatible with ethical theorizing, the author downplays W as anti-theorist and promotes his own idea of modern ethical theory as concerned with clarification. Unsurprisingly, Wisnewski is less than successful at these tasks, given the overwhelming textual evidence against his contentions. What makes an ethics of clarification Wian is surely the adoption of distinctive Wian methods to achieve clarity. At the centre of such methods is the resistance to theory. W remarks: 'We may not advance any kind of theory. There must not be anything hypothetical in our considerations. We must do away with all *explanation* and description alone must take its place' (*Philosophical Investigations* §109). Theories, according to W, tend to lead to essentialism about questions of meaning, and they obscure and — worse — distort the workings of our everyday language. Feeding on a narrow diet of examples makes us forgetful of context and distracts us from a 'look and see' approach. So theories, from a Wian view, are obstacles to clarity, not aids. The portrait Wisnewski paints blurs W's prominence as anti-theorist and renders him barely recognizable.

The author's argument that modern moral philosophy is generally a project of clarification is not convincing. Kant clarifies the rationale for not committing suicide *and* forbids it. Mill clarifies the basis of our moral framework and invokes the principle of utility to *guide* our decisions what to do in difficult circumstances. In his speech on capital punishment, for example, he argues that the death penalty should be retained. Both Mill and Kant do normative ethics with the intention of guiding our actions and both ground ethics: Kant in the rational autonomy of agents, and Mill in pleasurable consequences. In the process, W would suggest, they distort our concepts of pleasure and rationality, inducing ethical blind-spots. Hence, W's objections against theorizing extend to ethics and imply that it is a source of existential danger. Such criticisms and generalizations about ethical theories may be mistaken or exaggerated, but they are recognizably Wian. Another thing: Elizabeth Anscombe's 'Modern Moral Philosophy', iconic of the standard view on Wian ethics, is a regrettable omission from the bibliography. Finally, rhetorical phrases like 'Allow me to be more specific' and 'Allow me to put the distinction bluntly' verge on stylistic hypocrisy. Need any author ask a reader's permission to execute such standard scholarly tasks? Can readers really say 'no'?

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